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EXAMINATION OF MR. WORCESTER'S DISCOURSE.

A candid examination and Scriptural trial of a Sermon entitled  
GOD A REWARDER—Delivered at the Tabernacle in Salem,  
Lord's Day, Jan. 27, 1811—By SAMUEL WORCESTER, A.M.—  
Text, Heb. xi 6—“*For he that cometh to God must believe that  
he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek  
him.*”

IN the following examination and trial, we propose, 1st.  
That the examination shall consist in ascertaining the real  
sentiments which the preacher meant to convey, and their  
agreement or disagreement when compared together, and  
2d. That the scriptural trial shall consist in faithfully  
comparing the sentiments and ideas of the preacher with the  
Scriptures of truth.

We enquire 1st. what the reward is, which the preacher  
has described, which God will confer on those who diligently  
seek him. 2d, On what principle this reward is granted.

The answer to the first of these questions is found on the  
preacher's 8th page, in the following words. “Moreover,  
immortal life and glory, in his presence and kingdom, is the  
reward which God has promised to the righteous.”

It is necessary here to mark the distinctions which the  
preacher makes between this *reward* and the divine munifi-  
cence of the God of mercy, in the dispensation of his grace,  
wherein, for Christ's sake, he forgives iniquity and justifies  
the ungodly. This distinction is found in his 6th page, in  
the following words. “For Christ's sake indeed, their sins

are forgiven, and they are justified and restored to divine favor ; but we are now considering, distinctly, the reward which they are to receive, after being thus pardoned, justified and restored." It is evident from the above quotations, that the preacher does not consider either *forgiveness of sin*, *justification* by grace, or the *divine favor*, as any part of the reward which those are to receive who diligently seek God. Their reward is *immortal life and glory*, as above noticed from his 8th page.

2d. The principle on which this reward is granted we learn by examining the preacher on his 4th and 5th pages, where he says—"Reward often carries in it an acknowledgment of something due ; and implies that the receiver of it has merited, or earned, and on the score of justice, may demand, the good recompence. This, however, is not always the case. According to an acceptation of the term, neither unusual nor improper, the bestowment of any thing good, as a token of favor, is as really a reward, as the payment of a debt, or a compensation for service, in the exercise of justice. On the score of retributive justice, men, even the best of them, have no claim upon God for a recompence of reward. They are unprofitable servants ; they deserve from him nothing but evil ; and, if they receive good at his hands, it must be through the mediation of Christ and only in the way of mere favour. Accordingly the scriptures are clear in making this distinction ; and most decisively teach us, that the reward of the righteous is to be reckoned, not of debt, but of grace." Here it is evident that the preacher means to be particular in the explanation of the principle, on which this reward is granted. He shows both the negative and the positive. This reward is not granted on the score of merit as something due, for the best men in the world deserve nothing from God but evil. Reward, the preacher says, may be the bestowment of *any thing good*, as a token of favour. This is the principle on which he plans this reward, referring to the scripture where we are informed of a reward, which is not reckoned of debt, but of grace.

The preacher is furthermore particular in showing, in a number of instances, that God delights in and regards with complacency those on whom he bestows those expressions of unmerited favor. See on page 6th—"Would it not, then, be palpably absurd to suppose, that God will confer a reward,



as an expression of his favor, upon those in whom he has no delight."

We will now look and see if the preacher be consistent with himself. He says, "the bestowment of any thing good, as a token of favor, is as really a reward, as the payment of a debt." And this is the principle on which he has placed the reward, as above shown. Let us ask, what does the preacher mean to call the *forgiveness of sin, justification, and a restoration to divine favor*? If in these blessings there be a bestowment of any unmerited *good* as a true *token of favor*, then, of course, it comes into the principle, defined by the preacher, on which this reward is bestowed. He surely does not mean that the sinner *merits forgiveness, justification and a restoration to divine favor*. Is there no good bestowed, as a token of favor, in God's forgiving the sinner for Christ's sake?—in his justifying the sinner for Christ's sake?—nor in his restoring the sinner to divine favor for Christ's sake? Not only in idea is the preacher inconsistent with himself, but even in the choice of words, it would seem that he was careful to make his contradictions as plain as possible. Observe—the bestowment of any thing good, as a token of FAVOR is the reward which he defines; and yet he does not allow the *forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake, justification for Christ's sake, and a restoration to DIVINE FAVOR for Christ's sake, to be a token of FAVOR*! Look again—the preacher says, the best of men *deserve* from God nothing but evil, and if they receive good at his hands, it must be through the mediation of Christ, and only in the way of mere favor. Yet he dares not allow that forgiveness of sin through the mediation of Christ, justification through the mediation of Christ, or a restoration to the divine favor through the mediation of Christ, are tokens of FAVOR through this mediation! When this preacher is brought to see that all those favors above mentioned, are really unmerited favors bestowed on sinners through the mediation of Christ, and that they are in reality true tokens of that divine FAVOR which the father of our spirits entertains towards his alienated offspring, he will then see the propriety of placing them on the principle on which he has defined the reward mentioned in his text.

On his 5th page the preacher calls those who deserve nothing from God but evil, *righteous and truly pious*, and says that God regards them with complacency. On his 7th

page he says, "God's being a rewarder of the truly pious implies, that he will evidently make a visible and public distinction, between them and the wicked." Here the preacher will not allow that those who deserve nothing from God but evil, are wicked! There is to be a public and visible distinction, made between the wicked and those who deserve nothing from God but evil! This distinction the preacher illustrates by a number of scriptures, and in particular by a passage in Romans, where the Apostle declares that God will render unto every man according to his deeds. What do we ought to suppose the preacher to mean by quoting such a text? If God will render unto every man according to his deeds, what will those receive who deserve nothing but evil? Answer, nothing but evil. These are those whom the preacher calls righteous; between them and the wicked this public distinction is to be made! What are the wicked to receive, which will distinguish them thus visibly, from those who are to receive nothing but evil? Christian reader, this confusion does not grow from the pure word of divine revelation, but from the preacher's contradictory statements.

Notwithstanding the preacher is particular on his 4th and 5th pages to define the *reward*, mentioned in his text, to be a bestowment of favor, through the mediation of Christ, on those who deserve nothing but evil, by following him only to his 7th page we find him entirely off from such a principle, and wholly on that of merit. The following are his words; "The father of a family may have particular complacency, in such of his children as are more dutiful than the rest; the preceptor of a school may have particular complacency, in such of his pupils as acquit themselves well; the sovereign of a nation may have particular complacency, in the most loyal and deserving of his subjects; and yet, for certain reasons, neither of them may deem it proper, to make his particular complacency known. But should the father, the preceptor, and the sovereign, respectively confer rewards, in the several cases, a disposition to let their complacency be known would be decisively evinced. Nor less decisively is the same disposition implied, in God's being a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

On what principle does the preacher, in the above paragraph, establish the divine complacency and bestow rewards? Answer, he uses the father of a family, the preceptor of a



school and the sovereign of a nation as similitudes to represent God, who is, and is a rewarder of them who diligently seek him. He establishes the father's particular complacency in the greater dutifulness of some of his children, than was found in the rest, and on this principle he places the reward. He represents the preceptor's particular complacency to stand on the supposition that some of his scholars acquit themselves better than the rest, and he also places the reward on the same ground. He mentions the most loyal and deserving of the Sovereign's subjects as the objects of his particular complacency, and rewards them for their loyalty and faithfulness.

That the preacher really meant to be understood according to the representation made in the above paragraph, may be more fully seen by the following from his 8th page, where he again applies his similitude. "For should the father, the preceptor, or the sovereign, make no distinction, but confer on the bad the same favors which he confers upon the good, the very essence of reward would be utterly lost."

Why would the essence of reward be lost in the above case? Answer—Because those whose works deserved nothing but evil, would receive the same tokens of favor as those whose works were good. This is as direct a contradiction of the ground on which the preacher has placed the reward described on page 4th and 5th, as can be stated in words.

Should the sovereign of a nation, on due examination of all his subjects, find that the most loyal and faithful subject in all his dominions deserved nothing from him but evil; that hanging him in gibbets, with the association of all the circumstances which could contribute to aggravate his misery, which it were possible for the sovereign to employ, would be nothing more than what this subject justly deserved, what would the rest of his subjects deserve from him?

Nothing can be more evident than that the most disobedient, disloyal, and unfaithful subject of a sovereign, can deserve nothing worse than "nothing but evil." The reader may wish to know what the learned preacher was after, which led him to make such confusion and contradictions in his statements. Be patient, we shall see by and by; but first let us try his doctrine by the scriptures of divine truth.

If we find in the sacred scriptures evidence to show that

God does, in fact, exercise a love toward sinners, while in a sinful condition, of such a tenor as causes him to afford them any tokens of unmerited favor, we shall find him possessed of the complacency or delight in them, pursuant to which our preacher argues the reward noted in his text. And furthermore, if we find, according to scripture, that the forgiveness of sins, justification through Christ, and a restoration to the divine favor, really to imply all that is meant by *salvation*, or immortal life and glory, we shall see that the preacher has made, or endeavored to make, a distinction where there is none.

1st. We want to find proof that God loved sinners ; and 2d. we want to find proof that in giving to sinners a token of his love, God has made as high an expression of love as is spoken of in the sacred writings. See St. John, iii, 16, 17. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." 1st John, iv. 10. "Herein is love ; not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Rom. v, 8. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

These scriptures sufficiently prove that God loved the world of mankind while in a state of sin, and that he sent his Son to die for the world of mankind as a token of his love to them. That the delivering of Christ to die for mankind is considered as a major token of the divine favor, we learn from Rom. viii, 32. "He that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things." The plain argument of the apostle in this scripture, is, as God has loved us with a love which is stronger than death, and has, pursuant to that love, delivered up his own Son for us all, which is the richest token that could have been sent even from heaven itself, there is surely no other gift too great for him to bestow. Look now at the preacher's question on page 6th, before quoted, "Would it not, then, be palpably absurd to suppose that God will confer a reward, as an expression of his favor, upon those in whom he has no delight ?" We have just proved that the death of Christ for sinners, was a commendation of God's love to



them, which proves, according to the preacher's question, that God delights in them !

The preacher is willing to acknowledge that God loves his creatures, as his creatures, but the light in which he places this love is truly shocking, and one of the greatest examples of folly and madness which has ever fallen under our notice. See his 22d and 23d pages. "Yet it is affirmed God loves his creatures. Why ? Because they are *his* creatures. So does the vilest man on earth love his children, because they are his children ; so also does the most savage beast of the forest love her *offspring*, because they are his *offspring* ; and there is as much holiness, as much moral goodness, in the natural affection of wicked men for their children, or even of brutes for their offspring, as in the love, which, according to the deniers of future punishment, God has for his creatures." It may be well to notice here, that what the preacher means by *future punishment*, is an endless exclusion from the felicities of heaven, as may be seen on his 9th page, which we shall notice in another place. What do we ought to do with the above representation of love ? If God do not punish his offspring eternally, the preacher says there is more holiness in his love, than there is in the love of a brute !

The unavoidable and most favourable conclusion from the preacher's statements, is, that God exercises a holy love towards those whom he excludes from endless happiness, and an unholy love towards those whom he favours with eternal felicity ! This conclusion will evidently appear to the reader's understanding, if it be observed, that the preacher defines the reward in the text to mean *immortal life and glory*, granted to those who *deserve* from God *nothing but evil* : for surely if not to punish eternally any of God's offspring, proves his love to be unholy, it must be such as deserve nothing but evil from him.

2d. It will not be necessary to multiply much scripture to show that the forgiveness of sins, justification through Christ, and a restoration to divine favor, imply as much as the preacher has set up, as the reward mentioned in his text. See Eph. i, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace, wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence ; having made known unto us the

mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself ; that in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him : in whom we also have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." In this scripture is seen the forgiveness of sins according to the *riches of God's grace*, in which grace God hath abounded towards us in all *wisdom and prudence*.

It surely must be according to the riches of God's grace, that any of his offspring are privileged with immortal life, and it is according to the *riches* of his grace, that he forgives sins. The subject of justification is treated on particularly by St. Paul to the Rom. 5th chap. 18th verse—"Therefore, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation ; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." That this life, to which all men are justified by the righteousness of Christ, is eternal life, is seen by the last verse of this chapter. "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." The divine *favor* is spoken of in Psalm xxx, 5. "In his favor is life." The preacher surely will not deny that this life is *eternal life*. Now from the foregoing scriptures is it not evident, that the forgiveness of sins, justification unto life, and a restoration to the favor of God, which is life, and the gift of eternal life, are all the same in the divine wisdom in which God hath abounded towards his creatures ? If so, what is the conclusion ? Answer—the preacher endeavored to make a distinction where there is none.

If the reader desires to know why the preacher should wish to make the above distinction, we observe, that should he allow the justifying of the sinner unto life, through Christ, to be the reward which is not reckoned of debt, but of grace, then this reward could not be granted to any but sinners, but he contends that if the wicked have it, as well as the righteous, it destroys the very essence of reward.

Let us look of the scripture which speaks of the reward of grace. See Rom. iv, 4, 5. "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to



him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." If believing that God will justify the ungodly, be counted for righteousness, what will the belief that God will not justify the ungodly, which the preacher contends for, be counted?

As the reader may be impatient to know what the preacher would be at, which obliges him to be so full of contradictions, it may be well to observe, that he is endeavoring to prosecute a quarrel against the *heel* of a doctrine from which the *head* of his carnal mind has received some deadly bruises. Or to speak without a metaphor, he is at war with the grace of God which bringeth salvation to *all men*! In order to get along with this opposition, he is endeavoring to find a plausible argument against the salvation of sinners, and as he cannot find any of the human race who are not sinners, his endeavours bring him into all these contradictions; for he cannot raise a single argument whereby the salvation of one son or daughter of Adam can be effected, without establishing data by which the whole human family may also be saved; nor can he suggest an argument to prove either the justice or the certainty of the endless misery of any, without having it applied to the whole posterity of Adam.

In this difficulty we find him all the way through his sermon. One argument on which the preacher puts much dependence for success, in maintaining the doctrine of endless punishment, is, that God regards with complacency the *righteous*, to whom he will confer the reward of eternal felicity. The moment we bring this argument to a trial by the scriptures, it is lost.

Who does the preacher mean by the righteous? See his answer on page 5th. "The righteous are they who imperfect as they are, yet truly love and fear God. Reconciled to him by faith in the Redeemer, they walk humbly with him, they diligently seek him, cordially embrace his truth, and obediently observe his commands. All who are of this character are, in the scriptural sense, righteous, or truly pious." The righteous are again described on page 6th, as I have before noticed, in the following words: "For Christ's sake indeed, their sins are forgiven; and they are justified and restored to the divine favor." Now having gotten a description of the righteous as it respects their righteousness, let us ask how they became righteous? Answer, by

having their sins forgiven for Christ's sake, by being justified unto life for Christ's sake, and by being restored to the divine favour by faith, which is the gift of God. It is reasonable, and even necessary that the preacher be asked if all mankind would not be righteous in this scriptural sense, if God should forgive their sins for Christ's sake, justify them unto life for Christ's sake, and for Christ's sake restore them to the divine favor by faith, which is his gift? How is this question to be answered? Would the preacher be willing to suggest that there is such a radical difference in men, that some who are favored with all the above blessings, are still haters of God, and disobedient to his commands, and that others are lovers of God, and obedient to his commands? The plain case is this—the preacher wishes his hearers to leap over every thing which constitutes a man righteous in the scriptural sense, not noticing it as the gift of divine mercy, and by a sort of jumble, attribute the whole to creature goodness—then lest he be attacked for the notion of justification by works, declares positively that the best men on earth deserve from God nothing but evil. So we are landed exactly where we sat out.

In the midst of such Egyptian darkness, let us introduce the heavenly light of divine revelation. What do the scriptures hold forth as the ground of our righteousness? Do they not say of Christ, that the name wherewith he shall be called is the Lord our righteousness? Do they not say that by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life? Is not the true gospel faith a belief in him who justifies the ungodly? Are we not said to be justified freely by his grace?

But the preacher says, "Reward, indeed, necessarily implies distinction." But he has not proved the assertion; neither can it be maintained on either of the grounds of reward, as he has explained the word. If reward mean a compensation for services, then as the case might be, all might equally fulfill the task assigned them, in which case a distinction in the rewards would be inadmissible. Or, if reward mean what the preacher first pretended to confine himself to, namely, a bestowment of unmerited good, as a token of favour, even to those who deserved nothing but evil, a distinction in the rewards, in this case, would be equally inadmissible. We do not wonder that the preacher should make



the above assertion, because the fact is, he cannot do without it; and yet he cannot support it, nor make it agree with his own explanations of the word, so we find him as we have and shall find him.

The preacher bestows much labor to make it appear that God regards the righteous with complacency, with a design to infer from that, that God does not regard the wicked as he does the righteous, and therefore will not treat them with the same favours, and of course will not give unto the wicked the glorious gift of life and immortality which he is determined to bestow on the righteous.

We do not wish to inculcate an idea that there is not as great a difference in God's approbations of virtue and true piety, and his disapprobations of vice and irreligion, as there is between those opposite qualities, as exhibited in human characters; but we wish to be indulged in the query, whether there be in reality as much difference between those who profess the religion of the preacher, and sustain as good a moral character as professors in general do, and the most irreligious and immoral, as there is between the two states to which the preacher assigns them in the future and eternal world? It is not to be expected that the preacher will undertake to vindicate the affirmative of the above question. Yet he is laboring to show that in order to reward every man according to his works, they must be assigned to those *infinitely different* states in the eternal world! Is there an *infinite difference* in the characters of men in this *finite state*? If not, how is there to be an *infinite distinction* made in rewarding them according to their works? The preacher contends that the best of men deserve nothing from God but evil, yet wishes to insinuate that God cannot make the distinction in the eternal world which his moral government requires, unless he makes some of those who deserve nothing but evil, eternally happy, and others eternally miserable!

On his 11th page the preacher says, "Though the best of saints in this world are imperfect, yet for all that is holy in them, God regards them with complacency." Here the preacher defines so nicely as to bring his mistake to light. We will ask the preacher how these saints came by the holiness for which God regards them with complacency? He surely will not say that those saints have wrought this holiness for themselves, for which God thus regards them, for

if they did they would deserve something besides evil from him. He will then say that all the holiness which they possess is the gift of divine mercy. What was their situation before God gave this holiness to them? Answer—destitute of holiness. Did God love them in this state? If he did not, why did he give this holiness to them? Does he love this holiness any better than he did before he gave it to those sinners, or in a word does he love those sinners because he has done those gracious things for them? Or did he do those gracious things for them because he loved them? When the preacher can answer these questions correctly, he will learn to avoid those contradictions which appear in his present preaching. Would a father who hated his son be at the expence of educating and setting him up in the world, and then love him with complacency because he had an education, and was in business? Or would a father be more likely to do these things for his son because he loved him in the first place? What would the good people of this preacher's parish think of their reverend pastor, if he should tell all the parents that they had no rational or commendable love for their children, only in consequence of having fed them, clothed them, and educated them? Could the most modest of them forbear correcting his error, by telling him that all which he assigned as the cause of his loving his children, were only the effects of the love he had for them before he thus fed, clothed, and educated them? It would not be very strange if some who think it no crime just to speak to their minister, should think it a duty to hint something like the above queries to him, on account of the sermon we are examining. What is the reason the preacher does not see the impropriety of supposing that God hates the works of his own hands, and is at enmity with his own rational offspring? If this were the case, what sense or propriety would there be in all the plentiful scripture testimony, which goes to prove that God sent his Son to die for sinners because he loved them?

With a design to establish his darling tenet of future never ending punishment, the preacher states on page 21 and 22, the following remarkable hypothesis. "The whole gospel evidently proceeds on the ground, that mankind in this world are on probation for retributions of reward and punishment in the world to come." Corresponding with his



views in the above statement, he has the following query on page 16. "But is there any such distinction to be seen in this world? Does not one event happen to all; to the good, to the clean, and to the unclean?" Does not God "send rain upon the unjust as well as the just?" Nay, if there is any observable difference, is it not rather in favor of the wicked?—so much so, indeed, that many of the righteous in different ages, besides Job, and David, and Jeremiah, have on this account been greatly perplexed," &c. The argument which the preacher wishes to support by the foregoing passages, is, that as the whole gospel scheme occupies nothing but future rewards and punishments, the reward of virtue is not in this world, nor the punishment of sin. That the preacher means eternal never-ending misery, by future punishment, may be seen on his 9th page, where he says, "If then, the *immortal felicities* of heaven are to be conferred upon the righteous, as their gracious reward; it follows of necessity, that from these felicities the wicked must be excluded." That the above statement respecting the gospel is totally erroneous, we proceed to prove by the divine testimony. 1st. Let it be clearly understood, that, according to this statement, there are no blessings of the gospel conferred, either in this or the coming world, only according to the works of the creature in his probationary capacity and character. And 2dly. Compare with this idea the following scriptures. 2d Tim. i. 9, 10. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." Reader, God grant you understanding to judge with candor, whether this life and immortality, which is thus brought to light through the gospel, which is the grace given unto us before the world began, in Christ Jesus, be given to us according to our works. Look carefully, and see if the text do not utterly forbid such an idea. Eph. ii, 4, &c. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love, wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ; (by grace are ye saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us set together in heavenly places in

Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. Not of works least any man should boast." Here let us be particular. The Apostle speaks of GREAT LOVE wherewith God loved us. What was our situation, of which the Apostle makes mention, when God loved us with this GREAT LOVE? Answer, "DEAD IN SINS." Will the preacher say that this GREAT LOVE wherewith God loved us, even when we are dead in sins, has no more moral holiness in it than there is in the love of the vilest man on earth, toward his children? or even of the most savage beast toward her offspring? How depraved, how unsanctified, how ungrateful, how lost to all sense of the infinite love of God manifest to sinners, through a gracious mediator, must the heart be, from the abundance of which, the lips are thus defiled!

Who would undertake to make it appear, that the richness of the mercy, the greatness of the love, and the quickening of those who were dead in sins, together with Christ, of which the above text speaks so particularly, is all predicated on the works of the sinner, who is thus dead in sins, and depend on the issue of probationary services? St. Paul endeavors to confirm the Romans in the glorious truth, that by the righteousness of Jesus Christ, the free gift had come upon all men unto justification of life; and that the belief that God would justify the ungodly, was counted for righteousness. It is evident, beyond all contradiction, that the Apostle's meaning in the above scriptures and in his writings, in general, was directly opposite to the above statement made by the preacher.

Let us, in the next place, look at the argument with which the preacher endeavors to support his notion of eternal never ending rewards and punishments. This argument supposes that neither the righteous nor the wicked are dealt with, in this world, according to their works; that there is not made that distinction, in the dealings of God with his creatures, in this life as there really is in their moral characters. So far from that, he thinks that the wicked are rather smiled upon, while the righteous receive frowns.

The preacher is so confident in his notion on this subject, that he has even declared the truth of it to be authorised by



the experience of men in all ages. The following are his words on page 16, "surely then, to pretend that the present is a state of retribution, or that the righteous receive their reward and the wicked their punishment in this world, in any such manner and degree, as to make it manifest, that God is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him, is to go directly in the face of the *experience* and *observation* of all ages." In order to show the preacher to be utterly erroneous in his opinion expressed above, let us look at the economy of God with the house of Israel, pointed out in the 26th chapter of Leviticus. It is, perhaps, impossible to give a just and full representation of the subject of this chapter in fewer words than are there used, but for the sake of conciseness a few quotations only will be made. The reader is requested at the same time, to examine the whole chapter with attention. See verse 18, "And if ye will not yet for all this harken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins." See verse 21, "And if ye walk contrary unto me, and will not harken unto me ; I will bring seven times more plagues upon you according to your sins." 24, "Then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins." 28, "Then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury, and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins." The reader is referred to the text for an account of the particular punishments denounced against that people, which, while they are the most awful and dreadful which can be conceived of, as possible for a people to suffer in this world, not one of them relates to a future state in the eternal world.

The preacher will not deny that that people have been visited with all the plagues, punishments and chastisements which are denounced in the foregoing chapter, nor can he, with the least propriety, say that the punishments inflicted on that people for their sins, which God says is according to their sins, is not enough to astonish the most perverse of the wicked, with God's disapprobation of sin. See the 32d verse. "And I will bring the land into desolation ; and your enemies, which dwell therein, shall be astonished at it." It is unnecessary to labour the argument to show that the dealings of God with the different nations, noticed in Scripture, are marked with a decided disapprobation of sin, and an approbation of righteousness.

We know that a Prophet, of whom we have but little knowledge, complains something in the same manner as the preacher does, in the 73d Psalm ; after which, in the same Psalm, he confesseth himself to be ignorant and foolish, even as a beast ; a very proper confession for one to make, who is unwise enough to represent that the wicked, in this world, are better provided for than the righteous.

It is by no means uncommon for preachers, of all christian denominations, to warn their hearers against sin, and to urge, with great earnestness, the remarkable punishments inflicted on the Jews, as an example of what we ought to expect, if we are equally sinful. And in so doing they follow the worthy example of the great Apostle of the Gentiles. See 1 Cor. x. 5—12. "But with many of them God was not well pleased ; for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now, these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.—Neither be ye idolators, as were some of them : As it is written, the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornications, as some of them committed, and sell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now, all these things happened unto them for ensamples : and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." It seems not a little strange that a professed Christian preacher, who has the Bible for his guide, should endeavor to persuade his hearers to believe, that God does not punish sin, according to its demerit, in this world, where it is committed.

If it were necessary, it would be very easy to prove, on the other hand, that virtue is also amply rewarded in this state of being, according to its purity. But it seems unnecessary to labor this point, as men in general, and even pharisees, in these times, are loth to say in so many words, that God does not reward them according to the cleanness of their hands. However, as the preacher suggests that David was among those who thought they had some reason to complain, it may be well to produce his testimony to the



contrary ; and this will be particularly welcome as it clears the divine character from an uncharitable representation. See 2d Sam. xxii, 21. "The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness ; according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompenced me." 25. "Therefore the Lord hath recompenced me according to my righteousness ; according to my cleanness in his eyesight." Whoever will read and carefully examine the whole of this chapter, will see that no comment is necessary to show that David was fully satisfied with the marks of distinction which the rock of his salvation had made between him and his enemies.

Men of corrupt and envious minds, who have the vanity to believe themselves more righteous than their neighbours, forever feel wounded when they see that the heavens smile on their neighbours with shines & showers as well as on them, and they are under the necessity of gratifying their envy with promises of distinction in another world, where they will have the distinguishing favor of resting on beds of roses, while their malicious eyes will drink exquisite pleasure in seeing their fellow-creatures, even their own children, wrecked on sheets of scorching flames forever ! Such is the spirit and such the doctrine, with which the meek son of Mary, and the exalted Son of God, is dishonored in the world which he came to save. And this is the spirit, and this the deadly error, from which the divine light and heavenly love of his gospel, is revealed, to save transgressors.

The preacher on his 9th and 10th pages has introduced a number of passages of scripture, which he supposes go to prove that God will make an eternal distinction in the future world, between mankind, under the different denominations of righteous and wicked. These passages we will consider. The first passage quoted is from Psalm i, 5. "The ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous." If this passage were spoken or written by the direction of the Holy Ghost, to show that mankind will remain eternally in a state of sin and opposition to God, then the preacher has quoted and applied it justly, but we proceed to show that this is not the case. The Holy Ghost in this Psalm shows in a beautiful and most rational light, the distinction between righteousness and sin, the eternal durability of the former, and the momentary existence of the latter. Speaking in the 1st and 2d verses, of the blessed

man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, &c. proceeds in the 3d and onward, to show the difference between this and the opposite character. "And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season : his leaf also shall not wither ; and whatsoever he doth shall prosper. The ungodly are not so : but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish." Mark the distinction. The righteous is represented by a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season, bearing an unwithering leaf. The ungodly are represented by *chaff*, which the wind driveth away. A tree planted by a river of water, which produces its fruit in season, is in a situation to increase its species ; but *chaff* possesses no power to propagate itself, it is not a tree whose seed is in itself, and therefore is not a plant of God's planting, and according to the words of the Saviour, will be rooted up. Notice particularly, that the *way* of the righteous is known and acknowledged of God, but the *way* of the wicked shall perish. If the *way* of the wicked shall *perish*, will it remain in the coming world and to all eternity ?

When sinners are saved from their sins, by the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world, then the *way* of the wicked will *perish*. Thus we see the scripture, with which the preacher wishes to support his notion of endless sin and unmerciful punishment, is directly against him. Nor was he more fortunate in his second choice of a passage. See Psalm xxxvii. 18. 20. "The Lord knoweth the days of the upright ; and their inheritance shall be forever.—But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs : they shall consume, into smoke shall they consume away." No question from this passage necessarily arises but the following. What will finally become of the enemies of the Lord ? That this question may be answered satisfactorily, we will look at some passages of scripture directly to the point. See Rom. v. 10. "For if, when we were *enemies*, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son ; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." xi, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32. "As concerning the gospel, they are *enemies* for your sakes ; but as



touching the election, they are *beloved* for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and callings of God are without repentance. For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief: even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." Col. i, 21, 22. "And you that were some time alienated, and *enemies* in your minds by *wicked* works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy, and unblameable, and unreprouvable in his sight." These scriptures make it plain that the grace of the gospel, in its saving operations, converts God's *enemies* into *friends*, from *sin* to *righteousness*. And this is exactly the same truth as is thus spoken of the ministry of the word, committed to the apostles, "to wit, that God was in Christ Jesus reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing unto them their trespasses."

It may labour in some very honest mind, why the text should say, that the wicked shall perish? and why the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs? and why they shall consume away like smoke? Answer, the wickedness of the wicked being brought to an end, it may be justly said that the wicked have perished, or that they are destroyed, for in the character of the wicked they are no more. The fat of lambs being used for burnt offerings, where, on the altar of God it was consumed by fire, and went off in smoke; so the enemies of God must be purified by fire, even by the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning.

If contrary to the above solution we say, that the enemies of God will remain his enemies to all eternity, in a permanent state of rebellion, we as fully disallow the truth of the text, in that it saith, they shall be *destroyed* and *consumed*, as we disallow their final reconciliation to God.

Likewise it ought to be noticed, that by wicked works we have *all* been *enemies* to God; then of course, if the preacher have done justice to the text under consideration, it consigns us all to never-ending misery, while he himself, like blind Sampson, fares the fate of the expiring Philistines.

The third passage which the preacher has quoted for proof of his main point, unavoidably destroys his general argument in all its branches. See Isaiah iii, 10, 11. "Say ye to the

righteous, that it shall be well with him ; for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Woe unto the wicked ! it shall be ill with him ; for the reward of his hands shall be given him."

With a view to show the preacher his error, we ask him if he do not find himself under the necessity of acknowledging that he has been, if he be not now, WICKED? If he answer in the negative, we reply in the language of truth, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." If he answer in the affirmative, we ask whether he has received the "reward of his hands?" If the wicked must receive the reward of their hands, and if they cannot receive it in this world, then of course they must receive it in the world to come, where the preacher will as surely be punished as his doctrine is true ! And not only the preacher, but all those who are redeemed from sin by the blood of the everlasting covenant ; for they could not be redeemed from sin if they were not WICKED, and if they were wicked, and if they have not received the reward of their hands, nor can receive it in this world, they must in the world to come !

It is remarkable that the preacher should happen to avoid the verses preceding his quotation, which show that the evil reward of the wicked, as the fruit of their hands, is received in this world, where their sins are committed. See verse 8 and 9. "For Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen ; because their tongue and their doings are against the Lord, to provoke the eyes of his glory. The shew of their countenance doth witness against them, and they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not ; woe unto their soul ! for they HAVE REWARDED EVIL UNTO THEMSELVES." Here is the ruin of Jerusalem and the fall of Judah, which is the reward of the hands of the wicked, which they have rewarded unto themselves. There appears to be no more reason why the text under consideration should be applied to a future state of existence, than for applying it to a state of existence before we came into this.

The fourth passage which we find quoted for the purpose of proving that some of God's rational offspring will be punished unmercifully to all eternity, is found in Mal. iii, 16, 18. "For them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name, a book of remembrance was written before him. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day



when I make up my jewels ; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then ye shall return and discern between the righteous and the wicked ; between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not." If this scripture had said, that we should discern between those who are blessed with immortal life and glory in the eternal world, and those who are cursed with never ending unmerciful torments, it would have been to the preacher's purpose ; but as it alludes to no such thing, therefore it is no evidence of such an event.

If the reader will look at the foregoing passage in its connection, he will find that the prophet designed the text for a refutation of what the preacher endeavors to support by it. The preacher wishes to show that the wicked are happy in this world, and that the righteous are miserable, but that it will be different in the eternal world, &c. Now read the prophet. "Your words have been stout against me, saith the Lord : yet ye say, what have we spoken so much against thee ? Ye have said it is vain to serve God ; and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinances, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of Hosts ? And now we call the proud happy : yea they that work wickedness are set up : yea they that tempt God are even delivered." Here is what a very religious people said, and it corresponds exactly with what the preacher says in his sermon, That religious people are accused, by the Holy One in the 9th verse of this chapter, of robbing him, and of being cursed in consequence of so doing.

The preacher's fifth text is in St. John v. 28, 29. "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth ; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life ; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

On account of a general consent to an opinion of this text, which opinion has been long sanctioned by tradition, it is necessary to show particularly the error of applying it as it is usually applied. We shall show in the first place, that it is more reasonable to suppose that this text was spoken in a figurative sense, than the reverse.

See the 24th verse and onward. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not

come into condemnation ; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God : and they that hear shall live."—The *dead* here meant, were those, undoubtedly, who heard the word of Christ, and believed on him who sent him, whereby they passed from *death* unto *life*. This *death* then does not appear to be the death of the body, but of a moral nature.

The *graves* therefore, mentioned in the 28th verse, ought not to be understood to be the literal tombs or sepulchres in which literal bodies, when literally dead, were laid, because it is not using the text judiciously to change it from a figurative to a literal mode of speaking. If the graves are not to be understood in a literal sense, the whole passage evidently alludes to what at that time was taking place, and what would immediately follow. The similarity of this text with one in Daniel, is such as renders it reasonable to suppose that the Saviour had his eye on the same subject as the prophet had. See Daniel xii, 2. "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." Those who were asleep in the *dust* of the *earth*, spoken of by Daniel, mean the same, undoubtedly, as those who were in their *graves*, spoken of by Christ ; and by coming forth to the resurrection of life, and damnation, in one text, means the same as awaking to everlasting life, and to shame and everlasting contempt, in the other. That these passages relate to the same time and event, will not be disputed, even by the preacher.

Let us next endeavor to determine the time to which the prophet Daniel alluded. In the 1st verse the prophet marks the time with a distinguishing circumstance, which renders our success in fixing this time satisfactory. "And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time." See also this very time noticed by Christ in such a way as to make it evident that he meant the same time which the prophet did. Mat. xxiv, 21. "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." The case is now plain, if Christ and if Daniel meant to speak of never ending punishment in the eternal world,



would there be any sense in saying that there would not be such a time of trouble afterward? Those of whom Christ spake as being dead, and of whom Daniel spake as being asleep, are undoubtedly comprehended by St. Paul to the Ephesians, v. 14. "Wherefore he saith, awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Being in the *graves*, and in the *dust* of the *earth*, signify the insensible state of the Jews, resting in the rituals of the law, and those additional ordinances with which they made it void. From this stupor that nation was roused as with the voice of the Son of God, by the preaching of the gospel by the apostles, and by the dreadful calamities with which they were soon visited after the days of Christ. Then was there a dissolution of the Jewish hierarchy; the master of the house rose up and shut to the door, those who believed the gospel of Christ entered into the life thereof, thousands of others were destroyed by the Romans, and one of another, and the residue fell under the condemnation of choosing darkness rather than the light which God had sent them, and into the everlasting contempt in which that people have been through the ages since that time.

As a still further reason for understanding the time of which we have been speaking, as above set forth, the reader is desired to observe that the Saviour distinctly declared that all the things of which he spake in this communication to his disciples, in the 24th of Matthew, should take place in that generation. And not only is the reader requested to notice the above, but also, that the three parables in the 25th chapter, were a continuation of the same discourse which has its beginning in the 4th verse of the 24th chapter, and that that generation was the only time in which the whole was to be fulfilled. By duly observing these things, it evidently appears, that the sixth passage which the preacher quoted, is by him misapplied; as that passage is from this 25th of Matthew. This chapter begins with the word *THEN*, which refers to the time which he had before designated. Then follow three parables, which were evidently spoken to represent the things of which he spake in the 24th. The last paragraph, out of which the preacher quotes his proof of future never-ending punishment, begins thus. "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him," &c. See again Mat. xvi, 27, 28. "For the Son

of Man shall come in the glory of his father, with his angels ; and then he shall reward every man according to his works. Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom." By putting the words of our Saviour together, we learn to correct the vulgar opinion respecting those scriptures. As it is evident from what we have seen, that the judgment noticed in the 25th of Matthew, took place in the generation in which Christ lived on the earth, so it will appear reasonable to understand the everlasting punishment noticed in the last verse of this chapter, to be the same as the everlasting contempt spoken of by Daniel, as above noticed.

In the 26th of Lev. where the punishments of Israel are pointed out to be *according to their sins*, this punishment is called *chastisement*. See verse 28th—"Then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury ; and I, even I, will CHASTISE you seven times for your sins." So also in the last verse of the 25th of Mat. the word rendered punishment, is *kolasin* in the Greek Testament, which is of the same signification, the true meaning of which is to make better.

The seventh passage quoted, is from Rom. ii, 5—7. "But after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up to thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God ; who will render to every man according to his deeds : to them who, by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life ; but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doth evil, of the Jew first, and also the Gentile." By the views and sentiments exhibited by the use which the preacher has made of the above scripture, he appears to be exactly in the situation of a very worthy young man, of whom we have the following account in St. Mat. xix, beginning at the 16th verse. "And, behold, one came and said unto him, good master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life ? And he said unto him, why callest thou me good ? there is none good but one, that is, God ; but if thou wilt enter into eternal life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which ? Jesus said, thou shalt do no murder, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not steal,



thou shalt not bear false witness, honor thy father and thy mother; and, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. The young man saith unto him, all these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? Jesus saith unto him, if thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasures in heaven; and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions."

This young man expected to obtain eternal life by doing some good thing, and the Saviour answered his question according to its merit. If he were to obtain eternal life by his own works, it must be by keeping the law perfectly, without a single fault. And this is the sense in which St. Paul used his argument, where the scripture is found quoted by the preacher to prove that an eternal distinction will be made in the coming world, between those who are righteous and those who are wicked, in this life. To show that the apostle intended his argument for the purpose of destroying all ideas of a distinction in respect to justification unto life, we now proceed. But in this we shall depend, in some measure, on our reader's attention to the scripture in its connection, on this subject; beginning the Epistle, and studying several chapters. However, we shall give a few extracts which may assist in making the subject plain. See verse 1st of the 2d chapter. "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whomsoever thou art, that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same thing." Verse 3. "And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?" Verse 6. "Who will render to every man according to his deeds." In what manner does the apostle inform us that God will render unto every man according to his deeds? Answer, by granting to those who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honor, and immortality, eternal life. As Christ told the young man, if thou wouldst enter into life, keep the commandments; so the apostle evidently means, as he particularly shows in the 25th verse. "For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision." "But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation

and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile."

How many does the apostle pretend have come short of the GLORY mentioned in the 7th and 10th verses? How large a proportion of mankind does he believe have sinned? See his answer in the 9th verse of the 3d chapter. "What then? Are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before PROVED both JEWS and GENTILES that they are ALL UNDER SIN." Also, verses 23 and 24. "For ALL have SINNED, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," &c. With these quotations also consider the 19th and 20th verses. "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them which are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore, by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin."

What is very remarkable is, that the preacher should not see himself and every body else cut off from any hope of justification pursuant to any probationary works of theirs, since the apostle asserts that the matter is proved that both Jews and Gentiles are all under sin; that by the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified in God's sight, and that wherein he judges another he condemns himself. And it is also equally remarkable that the preacher should not see that every soul who has sinned and come short of the glory of God, is freely justified by grace, as expressed in chap. iii, 23, 24, which we have noticed above. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," &c. To bring the apostle's argument to a single point, see two passages, one in the 2d chap. 10th verse, the other in the 3d chap. 12th verse. "But glory, honor and peace, to every man that worketh good." "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." Look on now to the 5th chap. 18th verse. "Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life."



It is now hoped, that enough has been said to satisfy the reader, that St. Paul was a stranger to the preacher's doctrine of this eternal distinction, according to the works of the creature.

The 8th passage which the Preacher has quoted for the purpose of proving that God will punish men eternally in the future world, is found in the 58th Psalm, part of the 11th verse. "Verily there is a reward for the righteous." To correct the preacher in the application of this text, we need only quote the whole verse: "So that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous; verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth." The preacher says, there is a reward for the righteous, but he denies that judgement takes place IN THE EARTH! And perhaps for that reason he did not quote the whole verse! The last passage brought in this assemblage for purposes aforesaid, is found in Job xxxi, S. "Is not destruction to the wicked? and a strange punishment to the workers of iniquity?" This text we answer in the affirmative, but the passage says nothing about a future world, nor endless punishment.

We have now carefully examined the scriptures which the preacher thought were sufficient to prove the proposition for which he labours so zealously, and which seems to lie so near his heart, but we find none of those scriptures at all to his purpose. It is evident beyond all power of refutation, that the Holy Ghost never intended those scriptures to support the preacher's opinion of endless unmerciful punishment.

We seriously hope the preacher will not be disposed to call our reasoning on the foregoing scriptures, "quibbles and declamations," of which he speaks on his 21st page, unless he be disposed, at the same time, to prove such an assertion. This passage on his 21st page we will notice. Says the preacher, "We are not ignorant, indeed, of their quibbles and declamations upon this point; quibbles and declamations by which they delude the unwary, but which are completely refuted even by themselves. For while they talk of an atonement, and of being saved by the merits of the redeemer, they will also tell you that sinners are punished, as much as they deserve, in this world;" &c. As believers in God who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth, and as deniers of ENDLESS UNMERCIFUL PUNISHMENT, we do by no means assume the place of judgment, or

pretend to say how long God may, for gracious purposes, chasten or punish the rebellious. We believe that chastisement will be exercised by the faithfulness of our merciful father in heaven, as long as sin in us renders it necessary, and no longer. But let us look at what the preacher calls our quibbles and declamations. "For while they talk of an atonement, and of being saved by the merits of the redeemer, they will also tell you that sinners are punished as much as they deserve, in this world," &c. We presume that the preacher does not mean to be understood, that we say that all sinners are punished as much as they deserve in this world, because that would be saying what we could not prove by the word of God, and it would be saying what we presume the preacher would be loth to affirm that we do say. But we say by the authority of God's holy word, that God "will render unto every man according to his works." And yet we say by the authority of the same holy word, that all who have sinned and come short of the glory of God, are "justified freely by God's grace, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus." Now if the preacher has called this *quibbling* and *declaiming*, it belongs to him to prove such an allegation against the word of God, or to acknowledge himself, and that with confusion of face, to be in the wrong.

Though we wish to close this examination and trial, we beg of our readers to have patience a little longer, there being a few things more worthy of notice. In his improvement, the preacher says, 1st. "The doctrine of future punishment is a fundamental article of true religion." With this first, we will place his fourth inference, in the following words. "A denial of future punishment is virtually a denial of the gospel." It is supposable that every body believes that all *punishment* is *future*, in relation to the crimes for which punishment is inflicted, but we have before proved that the preacher means eternal never ending punishment in the future world, by *future punishment*.

By placing these two inferences together, we learn that the preacher believes that the doctrine of FUTURE, NEVER-ENDING UNMERCIFUL PUNISHMENT, is a FUNDAMENTAL ARTICLE OF THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST. Now it is evident that a religion ought to be called according to its PRINCIPLE or FUNDAMENTAL ARTICLE of faith; of course, the gospel



which the preacher believes and preaches, is, and ought to be called, the GOSPEL of ETERNAL, NEVER-ENDING PUNISHMENT ! St. Paul has informed us that the gospel was preached to Abraham, and he is careful to tell us the words in which it was preached, and makes an application of the gospel in such a way, as, it would seem, difficult not to understand him. See Gal. iii, 8. "And the scriptures, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, in thee shall all nations be blessed." With what blessing did God promise to bless all nations ? Answer, JUSTIFICATION THROUGH FAITH. Here the gospel was preached by God himself, but our preacher's FUNDAMENTAL article was not mentioned !

The same apostle tells us again, see Rom. iv, 3. "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." What did Abraham believe ? See the answer in verses 4, 5. "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Here is a particular account of Abraham's faith, but we find in it no mention made of our preacher's *fundamental* article. St. Paul, in Acts xx, 24, calls the gospel, "The gospel of the GRACE of GOD." In Eph. i, 13, he calls it the "GOSPEL of SALVATION." vi, 15, he exhorts us to have our "feet shod with the preparation of the GOSPEL of PEACE." Col. i, 23, he speaks of the "HOPE of the GOSPEL." Can there be any sense in calling the doctrine of *endless unmerciful punishment*, "the gospel of the grace of God ?" When ministers have their feet shod with the preparation of their *fundamental doctrine* of eternal damnation, do they appear beautiful upon the mountains as the "feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publishes peace ; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation." Who would be willing publicly to express their *hope* in this "*fundamental article*" ? With a design to support this *fundamental article* the preacher says on his 20th page, pursuant to his second inference, "The grand declaration of the gospel is, "He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." Here the preacher has made a mistake, which we will rectify. 1st. In this sentence, which the preacher calls, "the grand declaration of the gospel," is the thing to be believed, declared ? Answer, No.

2d. Is not the *gospel* the thing to be believed? Answer, Yes. What is the conclusion? Answer, the *gospel* is not declared in the sentence which the preacher quoted.

By paying that attention to the mission which our Saviour gave to his apostles, which every professed preacher ought to pay, we see as plain a distinction between the *gospel* and the above sentence, as there is between a fact, and the belief or disbelief of that fact; as plain a distinction as there is between good news, and belief or unbelief of that good news; as plain a distinction as there is between the justification of all men by the righteousness of Christ, unto eternal life, and men's believing or disbelieving in that justification. The Saviour commanded his apostles to go into all the world, and preach the *gospel* to every creature; but he never commanded them to publish in their preaching, what he told them would be the consequence of men's believing, or of disbelieving the *gospel*, in the room of preaching the *gospel* itself. But the preacher by the above mistake destroys his *fundamental article*, for it is plain that this *article* is not expressed in what he says is "the *grand declaration* of the *gospel*." Notice, "He that believeth shall be saved." In this part of the declaration it is shown that if the time ever comes when all men shall come to the knowledge of the truth, according to the will of God, expressed by St. Paul to Timothy, then all men will be saved according to the will of God expressed by St. Paul in the same communication. Therefore, it is evident that if all men believed the *gospel*, they would all be saved. In this case, what would become of this *fundamental article*? Here we find the preacher labouring in the absurdity of supposing, that the *fundamental article* of the *gospel* depends on the *gospel's* being disbelieved! Notice again, "He that believeth not shall be damned." Here is nothing said about endless damnation in another world. We should naturally expect to find the *fundamental article* of the *gospel* in the *grand declaration* of the *gospel*. How do the scriptures explain the meaning of the words, "He that believeth not shall be damned"? Answer, "He that believeth not IS CONDEMNED ALREADY, and the wrath of God abideth on him." This condemnation will abide as long as unbelief does, and no longer.

On his 26th page, the preacher, in endeavoring to show that the doctrine which he is at war with is more pernicious



than Deism, or Paganism, he says, "The Pagan believes that his God, or Gods, will reward the good and punish the bad."

It is evident that the preacher here means that the Pagan believes in his doctrine of endless punishment. Thus he conceives that the Pagans believe the *fundamental article* of the *gospel*! Why should the preacher disagree with the Pagans about non-essentials, as long as they agree in the *fundamental article* of religion? The ancient Carthagenians used to offer men sacrifices to Saturn, and in their supplications they put infants in the arms of his brazen image, made hot for the purpose of consuming these victims of an offended God. Similar abominations were also practised by the nations bordering on Judea, and even among the Israelites, but never by the command of the God of Abraham, nor to his pleasure. How far an ingenious mind might trace the consistency of such *sacrifices*, with the preacher's *fundamental article*, we will not pretend to say, but we very well know that the Deity worshipped by the believers of this article, hold that infants must burn in a much *hotter place* than *Saturn's image*, to *all eternity*, to vindicate some sacred property of their God!

It appears that this *fundamental article* of the preacher's religion, is in some measure growing out of repute in his town, and the *Paganism* with which it seems to be connected, not so highly regarded as formerly, for which see the following lamentation, on his 28th page. "My brethren, is it not most deeply to be deplored, that this corrupt and pernicious religion has an establishment in this place; and is regarded with so little abhorrence, and so little concern? Is it not to be lamented, with the liveliest sensibilities, that so many of the unstable and the ignorant, the unwary and the young, are ensnared by its seductive allurements?" Here is expressed the true spirit of those who mourned the absence of their idol, spoken of by the Prophet Ezekiel. See his 8th chap. 13th and 14th verses. "He said also unto me, turn thou yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations that they do. Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the Lord's house which was toward the north; and behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz." This weeping and lamenting the absence of an heathen idol, was by no means pleasing to God, nor is it likely that the preacher's lamentation for the lost repute of a *fundamental article* of

his *faith*, founded upon and supported by heathenish principles, is any more acceptable to that divine being, who has said, and has a right to say, "My glory I will not give to another, nor my praise to graven images."

After examining thus far, and finding so much in this sermon so very repugnant to both reason and revelation, one might suppose that all its errors had been noticed ; but this is not the case : nor is it conceived that one half have been pointed out. However, it is believed, and that confidently, that enough has been done to convince any unprejudiced mind that the general scope of the sermon is as contrary to the gospel of the grace of God, as it is contradictory within itself. As we have shown, we presume, to the preacher's understanding, that the use he made of his text is contrary to its true sense, he, as well as our readers in general, have a right to ask what that reward is, of which the text speaks, and how and where the diligent seeker of God is to receive it ? The answer to these questions is as easy as they are important. 1st. What is the reward which we expect to obtain by seeking after any nameable thing ? Answer, the thing itself. 2d. When do we expect to have this reward ? Answer, when we find that for which we diligently seek. 3d. What are the seekers, noticed in the text, in search of ? Answer, God. When will the diligent seeker of God be rewarded ? Answer, when he finds God. 4th. How can God be found ? Answer, by the Son's revealing him. 5th. In what character is he revealed ? Answer, in the character of a just God and a Saviour. 6th. Does not this reward imply eternal life ? Yes, for to know God, and Jesus Christ, whom he has sent, is life eternal. 7th. When is this life eternal received and enjoyed ? Answer, when this knowledge is obtained.

Had the preacher taken such a course, as the foregoing, with his learning and good sense, especially if he could have felt the spirit of the subject, how charmingly must the truth have been communicated from his lips, how profitable must his sermon have been to the sheep of his charge ! The abundance of scripture to support him would have beautified the discourse, and also have edified his hearers. How animatingly does the Psalmist speak on this subject in his 19th Psalm. Speaking of the law of the Lord, under the similitude of the sun from whose warmth nothing is hid, he says,



"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul : the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart : the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever : the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea than much fine gold ; sweeter also than honey, and the honey-comb. Moreover, by them is thy servant warned ; and *in keeping* of them there is *great reward*." See again, Prov. xxiv, 13, 14. "My son, eat thou honey, because it is good ; and the honey-comb which is sweet to thy taste : so shall the knowledge of wisdom be unto thy soul : *when* thou hast found it, there shall be a *reward*, and thy expectation shall not be cut off." In the parable of the lost sheep, what did the shepherd leave the ninety and nine, and go into the wilderness after ? Answer, the sheep which was lost. What was his reward ? Answer, the sheep returned safely to the fold. The Saviour says, the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost. What is his reward ? "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."

The thing sought for is the reward of the seeker. How unspeakably joyful is that soul made, who can say, "I have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write." Great, said the Saviour to his disciples, is your reward in heaven. The preacher uses this passage on his 16th page thus : "Great is your reward." Where ? Not on earth, but "in heaven." Where is that heaven which is the kingdom which Christ declared to be at hand, when here on earth ? Where is that kingdom of heaven which Christ told the scribes, pharisees and hypocrites, that they shut up against men ? Where is that kingdom of God which St. Paul says is not meat and drink ; but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost ? Let rejoicing angels give the answer. "Glory to God in the highest, *on earth peace, and good will toward men*." The preacher adds, "It is not in this world, but in that which is to come, that "God hath laid up for them that love him, what eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived." That the preacher did great injustice to this text, may be fully seen by its connection. See 1st Cor. ii, 7, 8, 9, 10. "But we speak

the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory : which none of the princes of this world knew : for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory. But as it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit." This scripture is as opposite to the use the preacher made of it, as any two propositions can be stated. He accuses those who endeavour to support the doctrine of Universal Salvation, on his 25th page, of making use of deception and false representations." This verifies one important scripture which has been used in this trial to correct one of the preacher's errors : " For wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself."

We cannot but regret having an occasion to point out so many erroneous ideas in the preacher's Sermon, nor can we express our sorrow that he should devote those abilities which are worthy of a better cause, in-persuading people to believe that the providence of God is more favorable to vice than to virtue in this world. Who will love virtue for the sake of being frowned upon by the providence of God ? Or is the preacher so much deceived as to think that he loves God because he is afraid of eternal punishment ? O deception, how many forms you wear ! O hypocrisy, with how many false pretensions do you profess religion !

To let the world know the illiberality of his heart, the preacher states on his 29th page, as follows : " And before this right hand be given to such communion, may this right arm perish from its socket." It was said of our blessed Saviour, that *he* received sinners, and eat with them. Are we worse than sinners ? Or is the preacher better than Christ ? He imprudently makes no reserve, even if he were convinced of the truth of the doctrine with which he is at variance now, yet the dreadful imprecation is on him, if he give his right hand to a communion where his own conscience would lead him ! We feel disposed to say to such an one, " friend, do thyself no harm." He must have said this inconsiderately ; we sincerely hope that he may speedily feel that his folly is forgiven.

Our readers are requested to pay a careful attention to the reasoning in the foregoing examination, &c. Comparing the



scriptures with the observations, let nothing of partiality govern in those researches after true wisdom and knowledge, remembering the exhortation of the Saviour : "Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me."

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ANSWER TO A QUESTION CONCERNING THE PROPER  
SUBJECTS OF PARTICIPATION AT THE LORD'S SUP-  
PER.

QUESTION—Whether it would be consistent with the order of our Churches, to give a general invitation to the Lord's supper, on our Communion days, even to those whose names are not enrolled among the members, provided their morals are generally good ? And as we view the sacrament of the Lord's Supper a Gospel institution, would it be inconsistent with right views of that ordinance to admit little children, of sufficient age to attend public worship, to participate that emblem of a Saviour's love ?

THE Lord's Supper is a commemoration of Christ's death by symbols—a commemoration of his death as connected with his resurrection. It is wholly celebrative in its kind, as was the passover in the house of Israel, of the deliverance out of Egypt. By handling this ordinance we bring nothing to God for our acceptance ; but remind ourselves of the manifestation of his grace in Christ Jesus. As we hold no change or elevation of the elements by "consecration," neither do we suppose any divine virtue to be infused into them and conveyed by them to us ; but we use them as mere external symbols of a reality independent of them. And we use this ordinance to impress our own minds more particularly with the things signified by them, by meditation thereon. For the bread which we break in this ordinance, we consider as exhibiting the body of Christ, and expressive of the union subsisting between him and mankind his brethren, and feed upon him in our hearts, rejoicing in the grace given unto us in him by the Father before the world, by the purpose of his own will, prompted by his goodness of nature. And in Christ's death, this grace was manifested, ending and closing

forever the mortal state of suffering, and bringing life and immortality to light in his own person as the head of every man—as the resurrection and the life of all human nature. And the “cup of blessing,” which we drink, we regard as expressive of the communion of the blood of Christ, even the blood of relation—the life hid with Christ in God, which shall deliver us from the bondage of corruption, and translate us into the kingdom of celestial glory—into the liberty of the sons of God. We take this emblematic cup of salvation, and drink abundant consolation out of the thing signified thereby; and forget our poverty in the earthly state, and remember our misery no more. And as we view the Salvation of God to be a common salvation, unto which every knee shall bow, and which every tongue shall confess, we must suppose it orderly to invite all present on our communion days, who are believers in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, to sit down with us to the table of the Lord spread among us:—we think it right to bid them all welcome to this feast of love! concluding that no one who commemorates the saviour’s death—“discerning the Lord’s body,” will wantonly and habitually indulge in vicious and unworthy deeds, to bring a reproach upon their profession, and tribulation and anguish into their own hearts. And why should there be, to seriously disposed persons, any more barrier to the communion, than to hear the preaching of the gospel? As the gospel that we preach is a common good equally open for all, why should not the communion, which is the emblematic exhibition of the gospel, be accessible to “whosoever will?” Why should those who hope, and who rejoice in the hope of eternal life in a world to come, refuse to celebrate divine love upon earth together, because of some difference in opinion on lesser matters?

As to little children partaking of the sacrament, by the direction and instruction of their parents, as they go to meeting, before they chuse it, or request to be admitted. I cannot say that it is at present my opinion. I know that small and great in the house of Israel ate the passover in celebration of deliverance from bondage, and that we baptize infants. But in baptism the subject is passive; and thereby, the putting upon us the heavenly image in the immortal state, by the power of God, is represented, which we may confess confidence in for our infants, as well as for ourselves, by such an

emblem applied to them, as that which God shall give to every one personally by a new dispensation. But in the communion we *act* by eating and drinking, which expresses the choice and acquiescence of the mind, which requires discretion in a greater degree than children possess when they begin to go to meeting, which is when about three or four years old. But when a youth of maturer age, say no more than eight or nine years, requests to be admitted to the communion, and understands the ordinance to be a celebration of the love of Jesus Christ, I think he or she ought to be admitted and received with pleasure. And we confess, were this a practice among us, and measures of instruction adopted to bring it forward, I doubt not but that we should have a goodly number of young professors, of whom it might be said, "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise."



## SIR RICHARD STEELE'S LETTER TO THE POPE.

(CONTINUED.)

But we have one very common, and very scandalous representation, in multitudes of our churches; which in my opinion comprehends all possible absurdities of that sort: and that is, of the Trinity in Unity, figured in a triangle; and generally inclosed in a circle over our altars; as it is in the pictures which are now become fashionable in our common-prayer-books. This is justly esteemed the most inexplicable and unintelligible mystery of our faith. And yet it is suffered by those who so esteem it, to be set forth, even to men's eyes, by a mathematical figure; which always supposeth the clearest and fullest ideas possible: and the Eternal Father of all things is represented to christians, as *one side of an equilateral triangle*. In this point, I am almost ready to give up the cause to you; and to own that all your crucifixes, and all the figures of your saints, (who were once men and women, and therefore representable) put together, have not any part of the monstrous absurdity of this single representation.

The preaching, as it is called, of our popular men, (upon



which we used to value ourselves exceedingly) is now come to that degree of offence, that in many places, persons of sense and seriousness stay at home out of piety, and absent themselves from our assemblies for fear of hearing. For the truth of what I affirm, I appeal to the intelligence sent you by the agents of your church amongst us, who have of late been seen to take notes from the mouths of some of our followed preachers. For my own part, I have imagined myself sometimes to be at the late negotiations at Utrecht, and to hear one of the French King's Plenipotentiaries setting forth the glorious and advantageous terms of peace which his master hath yielded to us : sometimes to be in the midst of commissioners of trade, hearing the terms of our commerce extolled to heaven ; sometimes at the funeral of a late Princess, and my ears filled with the sound of fulsome panegyrick ; sometimes in a cabal of malecontent Jacobites, disburthening all their spleen, as far as they dare, in invective, and satire, and insinuation, against the late revolution, and their present superiors ; sometimes in one of the meetings of some of our old rigid Separatists, inveighing against their Bishops ; sometimes in one of Your Holiness's Courts of Judicature, amidst the thunderings of wrath and damnation, denounced against all heretics and schismatics ; in a word, sometimes at the Bear-Garden, and sometimes at Bedlam : But at last, I have roused myself up, and found myself where I should least of all expect to hear, either such subjects or such language.

About the end of January, and the beginning of February, we are in a more than ordinary manner, called upon to knock one another on the head, because our forefathers, (and particularly the forefathers of many of our modern high church champions) happened to be great villains above sixty years ago. And this is thought an excellent topic to be insisted upon from generation to generation : nay, it is esteemed by many to be seasonable all the year round.

But there is another topic which seems to be in great repute again at this time ; and that is the danger of the poor Church : a danger, which constantly is seen to increase, in exact proportion as the hopes and interest of your holiness's friends in these parts decrease. So that to know whether this subject be in fashion, no one need to enquire any thing but how it stands with the Roman Catholics in England ;

whether they are pleased or displeased. Some advantage, I can assure you, your Church reaps from it; that it hath created a nauseous disgust in many of the best members of ours; and hath furnished some of our dissenters with this reason against uniting with us. *that they will never be of a church that is almost always in danger.*

One thing more I must here mention; that the Church, (I mean that part of the Churchmen I am speaking of) is now in full possession of the privilege of applying God's judgments to their neighbours: which our forefathers so justly condemned, and took such pains to ridicule, in the worst of our Separatists.

Thus, the death of our late Queen, is a judgment upon a nation unworthy of so much goodness; though some weak fanatics, on the other side, have shewed them how easy it is for any to interpret judgments in their own favor, by observing that she died the very day upon which the late Schism Act, designed (as they think) to rob them of a natural right, took place.

After King Charles II's restoration, the Fire which destroyed the whole city, immediately following the Plague, which consumed vast numbers of its inhabitants, furnished matter for this humor. How easy was it found to make these to be great judgments upon account of that very restoration! Now, the same impious humor, (which is the very essence of fanaticism, let it be in what church it will) can do with a thousand times smaller matters. A fire, not to be named with that; a mortality amongst our cattle, which all Europe hath felt much more grievously: these are not only declared to be God's judgments, (as without doubt they are) but it is sufficiently and plainly insinuated, that they are judgments (not for their own sins, their own private enormities, or public ingratitude to heaven for their security; for they never think of themselves in this view; but) for *something at Court which should not be there*: which all the world knows how to interpret.

Thus hath fanaticism its vicissitudes, like the other things of this world: sometimes reigning in the church, and sometimes out of it; sometimes against it, and sometimes for it. And thus is it come to pass amongst us, that preaching their own passions, and indignation, and resentment, under their

disappointed expectations, is called by too many, preaching the gospel, and delivering messages from Heaven.

Your Holiness must not judge from hence that this is universal. I can assure you we have some still amongst us who truly deserve the name of Preachers of the Gospel; some still left of whom the world is not worthy; and of whom the world seems to think itself not worthy: for those whom I have before described are the mighty men of popularity, that draw the affections and raise the passions of the multitude. This disadvantage however, they have, which Your Holiness's agents, (who help to move the machine) would do well to put them in mind of; that the times are changed; and that there is not now one at the helm, who will either support them in their exorbitances, or betray the administration into their hands.

I return now to other subjects.

One great privilege we acknowledge there is which you enjoy above us; that your material Churches, as soon as they are consecrated to the service of God, are exempt from all human power whatever. They become immediately the refuge of the worst part of mankind; they fling open their doors to robbers and murderers; and cut-throats and assassins feel their salutary influence, and find within their walls, safety from force or justice. In this manner, and in this sense, do you invite and receive sinners into the bosom of Christ's Church: and such a charm is there in that sacred ground, that no man can attack them in their asylum, without being destroyed by your thunder.

But then to set against this, we have some advantages of a like nature which you are not aware of.

I have known the time when the figure of a material Church cut out in pasteboard. placed upon a long stick so artfully that it might seem to totter, and represent the danger our poor Church is in; and carried with an awful air before a Reverend Dignitary at an election for Parliament-Men, hath been thought a sovereign remedy against its enemies, and of force enough to drive them headlong and spiritless out of the field. Nay, I have known the very word Church, or High Church, pronounced with a loud emphasis, and a proper accent, and repeated a due number of times; I have known it change the countenances and voices of a numberless crowd, into something fierce and horrid, more than what is



human ; blow up their hearts, and swell all their veins into a sort of phrenzy, (which they called zeal, because it felt hot) and have the very same operation exactly upon them, and push them upon the very same exploits, as if they had taken an excessive quantity of wine or opium. At the same time, I have known the same word, pronounced movingly and tenderly, with the eyes and hands lifted up to heaven, turn falshoods into truths ; a sinner into a saint ; and a disturber of the common peace into a tutelar Deity.

These are privileges which I think it worth your while to be acquainted with. But there is one more advantage I will not omit, because we seem to depend very much upon it, and have already received much good from it ; and you, as I am informed by travellers, have nothing like it. And that is, "That we never fail to remember our Church in all our cups ; to drink her health ; and to allow her prosperity a liberal share in all our merriments." Thus we sanctify our wine with our zeal for the church ; and the wine returns the civility, by keeping alive and increasing the warmth of our zeal.

This, many persons esteem to be a truer characteristic of a good churchman, than even the doctrine of passive obedience itself : because it is known that many other churches have espoused that doctrine ; but no other church in the world ever pretended to this practice but ours. No wonder if Your Holiness hears sometimes of disadvantages or disappointments in the affairs of your Church, when this custom hath been so much neglected or discouraged amongst your people. And if the word Church, alone, hath been found to perform wonders, what may we not expect from it, when it is made a toast, and hath all the strength and warmth of generous wine added to it?

It is very entertaining to observe how the Authority of the Church, the Articles of the Church, the Liturgy of the Church, the Homilies of the Church, shall all be urged by many of our loudest Churchmen, and pleaded against others ; whilst their force shall be disallowed, and totally neglected, in points disagreeable to themselves.

The Authority of the Church is the voice of God himself : But it is nothing to them, if they happen to have Bishops whom they dislike or suspect.

The Articles of the Church are irresistible arguments 2-

gainst others ; but they beg leave to except two or three unnecessary ones, which border too much upon Calvin, or press too hard upon your Church.

The Public Service is, beyond all example, irreprehensible ; but then, care must be taken to interpret the plainest passages in it by the most obscure ; and particularly, that the expressions of scripture and ancient creeds, be faithfully understood in the sense of modern schoolmen.

And as for the Homilies, they are good or bad ; of undeniable authority or of none ; just as they themselves please. Those against rebellion, are particularly good against all tumults, and disorders, and treasons, but their own ; and are to be urged home against the men whom they dislike. But those against your idolatry and antichristianism, and against many of your doctrines, I assure Your Holiness, are of no account amongst the same men, but as the warm, over-hasty efforts of ignorant zeal, in the first reformers : not fit to be urged against any true Churchman, (any more than those of the Calvinistical strain,) since the time of Archbishop Laud.

And all this passes smoothly, with such as are under their direction ; though it be so plain, one would think, to the most ordinary capacity, that all such matters are fixed with equal infallibility ; that authority is the same when it is against them, as when it is for them ; and that either all points of human decision are settled, so as to admit of no dispute ; or that none are. There is no medium. And unless this be allowed, without any empty distinctions, where there is no difference, I believe, in time, no man of sense will be able to see any difference between your Popery, and that of many amongst us, but that ours is Protestant Popery, and yours is Popish Popery.

Learning hath been deservedly looked upon in polite countries, as the great support and ornament of human life and true religion. But the state in which it is now amongst us, is hardly to be described. It seems as if not only learning, but even curiosity itself, and all pretence to it, were vanishing from among us. Our education is, of late, framed to heat our young men into faction, rather than to animate them into learning ; and boys, as soon as they are taught any thing, are seen to be entered into violence, and prepared for all the impressions of a party.

Our Universities have been deservedly styled fountains of Literature. But I wish I could say there were not those in them who industriously poison those fountains, or who employ all their capacity and credit to make it become a more laudable character, to be a furious zealot, than a good governor or a hard student ; and more reputable learning, to be thoroughly versed in the half-sheets and pamphlets of party scandal, than in all the good sense of the best authours of antiquity. And I wish I had not occasion to add, that from hence it comes to pass in them, that sound learning, and good manners, and industry in promoting these, are often seen to expose a man to a series of discouragements, opposition, and ill-treatment : whilst party zeal shall recommend persons of whose tempers, or capacities, or morals, I shall say nothing, to all the regard and honor that can be shewed them.

Your Holiness need not indeed, much fear any prodigious advances farther, on our part, towards learning or truth : which, unless we have it already in our possession, may lie eternally at the *bottom of the well*, for all that we are likely to do, to draw it up ; no *buckets* being allowed to be let down for it, but what are *stamped* ; and no *ropes* to be used to let them down, but what are of just such a *measure* and *strength*. For by this means, how can it be, but that the capacities and application of the greatest souls must be exceedingly cramped and stinted, when the whole method of procedure is so exquisitely fitted not to enlarge the views and enquiries of men, but to determine the mind to one certain set of thoughts, already fixed to be truth ; and the tongue to one certain set of sounds, for their eternal defence and security ?

The Public Exercises are not indeed exactly what they were, when the bare word of Aristotle, or Aquinas, passed for truth, as currently as a Bank-note passes for money.— But the method they are in is still the same in quality, though not in quantity. For though we have discarded many particulars, yet we retain, in the whole, much the same forms and modes which you left with us at parting, for the better securing of what we have not discarded.

We dispute still in a constant round, as you, our predecessors, used to do, *De omni Ente, scibili, and non scibili*. We have still the same *Quoad hoc*, and *Non quoad hoc* ; the same *Quatenus*, and *Non quatenus*, which we inherited : and many other auxiliary words, of great importance to refresh



the disputants, and to keep a dispute going ; but of none at all, towards the discovering or recommending any one single truth to the world.

This method may be called the art of wrangling, as long as the moderator of the dispute is at leisure : and may well enough be supposed to be a game at learned racket. The question is the ball of contention : and he wins who shews himself able to keep up the ball longest. A syllogism strikes it to the respondent : and a negation, or a lucky distinction, returns it back to the opponent. And so it flies over the heads of those who have time to sit under it, till the judge of the game strikes it down with authority, into rest and silence.

This is the state of things with us, and that chiefly in cases in which all generations, and all men, are equally concerned. What is truth, is determined for us, and settled before we are born, by forefathers and superiors, in the ages of illuminated understandings, and unprejudiced judgments. And our learned education doth not so much as pretend to be designed for farther discoveries of truth, in the most important matters : but is all framed to teach us the art of defending that which is already found out and decreed to be truth, before our time ; and the great duty of being humbled into contentment with what is already provided for us ; and into an abhorrence of all vain thoughts of improving the intellectual estate left us by our careful ancestors. The voice of authority is this : *hitherto shalt thou come, and no further.*

After this manner is every thing in our schools of literature and theology, established within unmoveable limits. We have established questions, out of the number of which it is not allowed to wander. And this creates a round of established syllogisms, to carry on the attack, and established distinctions for the defence. From hence it comes to pass that even the youngest disputants are often heard, in their first public exercises, to debate about God's prescience, and future contingencies, in one fixed method of difficulties and solutions ; and with full as much learning, and as clear light, as is to be found amongst the labors of the weightiest of the scholastic writers themselves.

But the good effect is much more visible, and much more remarkable, in the Theological Schools, where the method is equally, in one uniform, unvaried course : and where, by

that means, it is not quite so uncommon a thing as some persons wish it were, to hear St. Athanasius's, or St. Austin's word, go farther than an Apostle's ; and an idle distinction, or incomprehensible definition, of one of your schoolmen, decide a difficulty much more to satisfaction, than a plain, intelligible expression or affirmation of our Saviour's.

If it were in any degree better, either in the established universities of North Britain, or in our dissenting academies in the South, I would freely own it. But take my word for it, it is, of the two, rather worse. In the North, there being a temporal kingdom of Christ, as well as a spiritual one, settled by law ; ordination and preferments are by consequence rigidly and inseparably tied to one certain scheme of opinions : and this naturally determines the public education ; and makes the rising generation conscientiously avoid the least tendency to any design of being wiser than their forefathers.

And in the South, amongst our non-conformists, it is much the same. The same logics, and the same bodies of theology, (as they are called) descend from generation to generation. The same systems and syllogisms, definitions and distinctions, pass on current for Divinity : and Calvin and the Gospel go hand in hand ; as if there were not a hair's breadth to choose between them.

There may be exceptions ; but this is generally the case : and the more unlikely soon to be otherwise with them, upon two accounts ; first, because their toleration is founded upon their mighty boasts of adhering more strictly to the Doctrinal Articles of the Church, in the sense of the first reformers, than the Churchmen themselves ; the defence of which therefore, is pretty much left to them, to pride themselves in : And, secondly, because their very catechisms are systems of all the deep points, and common-places, and hard words in divinity ; by which means, their people being all systematical divines, keep them strictly to the received scheme, and raise very great clamours, and very little contributions, upon the least deviation from what they have hitherto valued themselves upon understanding better than their neighbours, and have been taught, from children, to embrace as the very essence and life of the gospel.

To this method of literature it is, that we owe (what is of the greatest service to your cause,) such a multitude of wri-

ters, on all sides ; who, when they come abroad into the world, defend the sublimest points by the bare repetition of words, to which (when they are pressed) they are not ashamed to own, that they have no such meaning as they fix to them, upon any other single occasion, in the whole compass of speaking : that is, *none at all*.

And to this it is that we owe, at length, the blessed discovery, and candid profession, that it is not fit that we should have any meaning to our words, when we speak about God, the Supreme Being, whom we are to worship, in spirit and truth. A profession which, if it doth not turn to Your Holiness's account, it is not their fault, who own it, amongst Protestants.

The three great impediments to any advances towards a Reformation in your Church, have been always found to be these ; a false learning ; a real ignorance ; and a system of preferments, fixed and tied down to a particular system of opinions, or words.

The two first often go together. There is often in the uneducated, a real ignorance, without a false learning : whereas, in the others, there cannot be a false learning, without a real ignorance. But, both put together, would have little effect against the nature of things, and the irresistible force of truth, without the last of the three. Were it not for that, you would quickly find, that the mask would drop from the face of things ; and the clouds, which false learning had wrapt about the most important points, would be dissipated, and leave truth, in its lovely simplicity, naked, and open to every honest eye.

But your security, you find, lies in the last. Whilst the Church, and the World, are so closely and vitally united, and the immense riches of your Archbishopricks, Bishopricks. Deaneries, Cannonries Abbies, Monasteries, Cardinalships, and Popedom, are all confined to the worship of the Mass-Book, and to the creed and decrees of the Council of Trent : the sons of your church find little occasion for any such learning, as may tend to poverty ; but a great deal of comfort in another sort of it, which carries as big a sound amongst the vulgar, and turns to a much better account, as it brings along with it defence and riches both ; and serves to support those opinions, which support that Church which is endowed with those *riches*.



I do not mention this with a view to your affairs only ; but to remind you, that you have so much of this yourselves, and find so prodigious a benefit in it, that you have the less occasion to wonder at, or envy, the *something like it* amongst us Protestants.

Your Holiness needs not, I think, call in the assistance of your Infallibility, to judge, from all this put together, in what a condition we really are ; whilst, all the while, we are boasting of our glorious separation from you, and deafening the by-standers, and tiring ourselves, in our several ways, with loud cries about our own apostolical purity and perfection.

As far indeed as we are in practice separated from you, in what we ourselves condemn in your Church ; so far we may, consistently enough, boast. But as far as we are united to you in our practice, though irreconcilably separated in words, methinks, (to confess the truth) you have rather a handle of boasting against us, that we ourselves think fit to practise, in some instances and some degrees, what we profess so severely to cry out against in your Church.

I forget that Your Holiness hath the affairs of the world upon you. But I can't persuade myself to make any apology, when I consider it is your interest that I should go on in this odd, unusual way, of speaking truth.

I have freely laid before you, what may reasonably enough give you and your Cardinals a sensible pleasure. I have without reserve, shewed you many of the follies, weaknesses, unhappinesses, inconsistencies, and wickednesses of us Protestants. It is but just to ourselves, now, that I should change the scene a little, and take down your satisfaction a few degrees from that height, to which it may by this time be raised. I scorn to flatter you, any more than ourselves : and how should you know the true measures, either of your hopes or of your fears about Great Britain, if you be not truly informed of our advantages and happinesses, as well as of the contrary. Nor is it any thing more than what is reasonable, that I, who have in the former part of this address, made no scruple to give myself pain, in order to give your holiness pleasure, should now be permitted to give you pain, in order to give myself pleasure : especially, since I promise, that if any thing offers which it may be a satisfaction to you to know, I will without reserve intermix it, to mitigate the affliction.

Know then, Holy Father ; and let the conclave of Cardinals know ; and let all your whole Church know ; and let the Universal World, wheresoever your Missionaries are dispersed, know, that King GEORGE now wears the Crown of these Realms ; that the Elector of Brunswick-Lunenburg, is now King of Great-Britain ; that the Protestant branches of our Royal Family, have in him begun to take place ; that the limited succession, so hateful to your friends, is now not only in the dead letter of our laws, but in possession ; that he is come to our wishes, safe, and untouched by the dangers of land or sea ; that he is not only come, but is come attended by his Royal Son, from whom we engage to ourselves the imitation of his father's virtues, and the continuance of our happy state ; that he is surrounded with a numerous young family, who raise the delight and expectation of all who see them ; with that Princess at the head of them, who, if we may judge from her past unequalled conduct, seems destined and reserved by Heaven, for the true interest and glory of the Protestant cause : a cause, which (as far as the nature of human affairs gives leave) now promises her, in gratitude, one earthly crown, in recompence for that other which her great soul formerly sacrificed to it ; and assures her of a heavenly one hereafter, whatever becomes of the images of greatness in this state.

Forgive me that I repeat it ; King GEORGE now fills the Throne of Great Britain : and believe me, notwithstanding all the intelligence of your friends from hence, (who are ever writing only what themselves wish) believe me, I say, he hath no thoughts of leaving us. His heart and soul is with us : and he hath too much greatness of mind, to be moved either by the brutal insults or the base misrepresentations of his enemies, to any thing but what is great and becoming. He feels he hath the riches and the courage of the nation on his side. He sees himself surrounded by true friends, as well as patriots, at Court. The coolest heads and the warmest hearts, are in his service. And he is blessed with a first Parliament, whose affections and passions are his ; engaged in his cause ; and inflamed with a zeal for his glory and interest, which are one with their own happiness. And what hath he to fear, thus guarded without ; and possessed within of every thing that can recommend a Prince to the love of a people ?

I can only attempt to give you some faint idea of what he is, and what we enjoy.

“To see him, is to love him. Never was so much integrity, and so much constancy, and so much sweetness, composed together, and expressed in features. He hath the dignity of the Prince, tempered with the ease and affability of the gentleman. His religion is christian virtue, without bigotry. Justice and beneficence are all the arts of government which he desires to know : and in these he excels, enough to make him the delight of mankind. The wisdom of integrity in the public administration, is now going to shew itself to the senses of the world, to be vastly superior to all the mean artifices of falshood and cunning ; and to diffuse its blessings to present and future generations.

If you would know whether this view of happiness be any thing more than imaginary ; ask his subjects in Germany, how he governed, when his will was his law ? Enquire, whether he did not then think himself bound to observe the great law of nature ? and, whether justice and beneficence were not the measure of his administration ? Or else, only ask them why they took leave of him, at parting, with floods of tears ? Why they followed him with the tokens of universal sorrow, and with all the signs of distress at such a separation ? And then judge, whether it would not be very unjust in us not to conclude, that he who hath been tried by arbitrary power, and governed with justice and goodness, when his will was the law of his government ; will now be determined by the same justice and goodness, to make our law his will ; and to carry our legal happiness to a height unknown in former ages ; and to place it if possible, out of the reach of all future danger ?

How could I dwell upon this subject, did I not fear it would be too troublesome to Your Holiness ?

In the midst of all this, I know you have comfortable stories sent you, of the difficulties and discouragements he meets with. I confess it. He hath great difficulties to encounter. But then he hath a great soul to combat them ; and an unshaken firmness of mind to go through them with glory.

I am not going to dissemble in this point. The agents for your Church, and those amongst us who constantly go hand in hand with them, have without mercy embarrassed the affairs of the nation. It requires a wisdom, an applica-



tion, a dexterity, a perseverance, almost more than human, to rectify so many disorders and confusions as have been introduced. All these, he comes prepared to exert, to save and establish us.

I confess many are the obstacles and discouragements he hath already experienced : the fierceness of a false religious zeal, kindled and fomented by your emissaries, into fury ; the madness of rabbles, incensed by those who can have no security but in confusion ; the invectives of some pulpits, insinuating the vilest falshoods into the minds of the populace, and giving the lie in the face of the sun, to all former professions of a sincere good-will to his interest.

(To be continued.)

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## MR. BALLOU'S DISCOURSE AT MR. KNEELAND'S RE-INSTALLATION.

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Rev. 2, last clause of the 10th verse.

*" Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."*

AMONG the inestimable properties which render the Gospel of God our Saviour justly entitled to the highest possible consideration and confidence of rational beings, and a subject into which the Angels delight to enquire, FAITHFULNESS holds a conspicuous rank.

The Gospel derives this character from the nature of its author, and the relation of all moral beings to him. The gospel is a ministration of life from the very nature of God to moral beings, constituted in his image, the brightness of his glory. This ministration of life discovers the faithfulness of God in that he acts towards his creatures consistently with his nature, which is love, and consistently with the moral relation in which he has constituted his creatures to himself, which is such as love, directed by infinite wisdom, devised. That faithfulness which is consistent with the character of a father, and which ornaments as well as dignifies his preeminence, equally regards, on the other hand, the happiness of the child, and any deviation from the last object, is equally wide from the first. Thus we shall ever find the honour of God, as the father of his creatures,

and the highest happiness of his offspring, inseparably connected and manifested in the Gospel of eternal life.

The beginning of the creation of God, in whom it pleased the father that all fullness should dwell, who occupies, by the merciful appointment of our all wise creator, the high office of mediator between God and man, has obtained, among many other titles of honour and distinction, the name of **FAITHFUL**.

The faithfulness of Christ is seen in his having no will or work of his own, but attending to the will and work of his father, according to his words. "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." Again, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." The will of the father, as testified by Jesus, admits of the loss of none of all the heathen and the uttermost parts of the earth, who are given to Christ, but embraces their being raised up at the last day.

As co-workers with Christ, those whom he has called to the ministry of reconciliation, and chosen as vessels of honour to communicate the things of the kingdom to the many heirs of salvation, by the faithful discharge of their duty, obtain the high honour of being called **FAITHFUL**; as it is written, "And they that are **WITH HIM**, are **CALLED**, and **CHOSEN**, and **FAITHFUL**."

The first and the last, who was dead and is alive, ever having a watchful care over the ministry of his word, noticing the peculiar circumstances of his servant, the minister of the Church in Smyrna, directed the solitary lover of his cross to communicate this encouraging promise to this suffering Angel of his Church: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

Not less numerous, nor less weighty, are the circumstances which require faithfulness in the ministry of divine grace in these last days of Antichrist, when the Church is coming up from the wilderness of error, than when encouragement was needed for the promotion of the gospel in the Churches of Asia.

The foregoing observations not only evince the propriety of the application and use of our text, on this solemn and joyful occasion, designed for the establishment of one, whom we consider as called, and chosen, and faithful, in the important work of the ministry, in this favoured section of the redeemer's heritage, but mark, with much precision, the evangelical path in which the doctrine of the text may be traced.

In further laboring this subject, arguments will be directed to the following particulars.

1st. An illustration of the importance of faithfulness in the work of the ministry, will be attempted ; and

2d. The promised reward, noticed in the text, considered.

1st. It is conceived that no higher consideration of the importance of faithfulness in the work of the ministry, can be urged, than that of the faithfulness of God, of which mention has been made. In this work of God's faithfulness, nothing was omitted which could render the scheme of the gospel more extensive or more sure in its benefits.

Could it be found in the plan of the Gospel, that our incorruptible inheritance rested on conditions at the disposal of any moral agency, at all subject to the imperfections of creature nature, the faithfulness of God would be out of the question. But blessed be God forever ! He "hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." This is the record in the archives of heaven. "God hath GIVEN unto us eternal life ; and this life is in his Son." And here it is just to observe, that this gift of eternal life in Christ, to the world of mankind, was not pursuant to any act of the mediation of the Son ; but all acts of his mediation are pursuant to the establishment of that gift in him, as will be seen directly.

Corresponding with the vast and merciful designs of our heavenly father, above noticed, we find the promise of universal salvation in Christ, made to Abraham, the father of the faithful : on which promise the chief of the apostles made the following comments. "*The scriptures, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, in thee shall all nations be blessed. When God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself. And this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise ; but God gave it to Abraham by promise.*" What is the apostle's conclusion ? "*Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering ; for he is faithful that promised.*"



2dly. The faithfulness of the captain of our salvation, in his process of mediation, ought to be noticed as a high consideration of the importance of faithfulness in the ministry of his grace.

The whole of this mediation, as has been noticed, is pursuant to the eternal purpose of God, purposed in himself, in the salvation of man: and not, as has been too generally taught and believed, the cause which induced our heavenly father to be thus merciful to his offspring. The unscriptural doctrine of God's being reconciled to his creatures thro' Christ, frequently expressed in supplicating the Deity to lift on us his *reconciled* countenance, while it is marked with the contradiction of changing an unchangeable being, supposes the infirmity to have existed in God, which the mediation of Christ was designed to cure in us. This infirmity is *alienation from the life of God, through the ignorance there is in us*. To remove this ignorance, destroy this alienation, and to reconcile the world to God, was the great object of the mediation of the Saviour. To this object, as a faithful and true witness, his labours of love, in preaching the word of the kingdom, in miracles of mercy, in suffering and death, in his resurrection from the dead, in his ascension into heaven, the descent of the holy ghost, and his abiding with his chosen ministers of peace unto the end of the world, were all directed.

If, contrary to this argument, it be contended that all those mediatorial acts were designed to placate the Deity towards man, it most surely supposes that the will to do this work originated in the mediator and not in the father. But Jesus says expressly, "I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." The will of the father, which Jesus came to do, is thus expressed: "*And this is the father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins. For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the Devil. For as the father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of Man. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. The Son of Man came to seek and to save that*

*which was lost. And thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins."* For the accomplishment of this great work, all power in heaven and in earth was given to Christ.

Where is the unhallowed hand that would put forth a finger to point to a single item of all this vast work, and presumptuously say, it will fail at last? Will a lover of the cross say this? Will the called, the chosen, and the faithful, who are with Christ, say this? Let it rather be said, as it is written, "*He shall see of the travel of his soul and be satisfied.*" "Brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the apostle and high priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."

3dly. As when our blessed Saviour was on earth, it was necessary to oppose all the moral virtues with all their divine energies, to the opposition which came, like an overflowing torrent, fed by a thousand streams, against the truth, so is the case at the present day. Then stood up, to oppose the gospel, the high priest, the doctors of the law, the Pharisees with their broad phylacteries, the ready Scribes, the Sadducees, with the whole ecclesiastical power of an apostatized Church. The vengeance of excommunication from the Synagogue awaited the unhappy victim of their religious zeal, who dared to confess Christ. And wherein does the present opposition differ from that, except in forms and names? The pride of popularity then swelled the unsanctified heart of the religious bigot, who thanked God he was not like other men; the religion of the day, like a loose garment covered the extortionous worldling, and their painted sepulchres, full of dead men's bones, were revered as friends and ministers of God. And who will attempt to show wherein that popular religion which denies the scriptural doctrine of universal justification through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, in the present day, differs from the old doctrine of the Pharisee? The more opinionated those blind guides became in the vain notion that they were the peculiar favorites of heaven, the more they found it in their hearts to lavish the curses of the law, which they had made void by their traditions, on those whom they styled sinners. And surely it requires but little sagacity to discover the same abomination in antichristian opposition to the gospel now.

It has been suggested that the divine energies of all the moral virtues were necessarily put in operation, by Christ, against the enmity which persecuted the truth which he preached ; and surely the necessity of faithful exertion is no less in the days in which we live. If prayers, watchfulness, meekness, patience, vigilance in labour and painful sufferings, were the characteristics of the saviour's travel, labour and ministry, what reason can be given why a different way should be travelled by the ministers of his grace in the present age of the Church ? If, in reply, it be argued, that no civil authority can now be directed by ecclesiastics against the religion of the gospel, it is happily granted as it respects the tolerant government of our favoured country, but why should not this circumstance be improved to urge the necessity of faithfulness in the ministry of reconciliation ? It surely ought to encourage the labourers in the vineyard of the Lord, when they see the earth swallowing up the flood of persecution which heretofore issued from the mouth of the Dragon. Can it be a reasonable excuse, for unfaithfulness in labour, to urge that but little danger appears to oppose ? The same spirit manifests its disposition in ecclesiastical governments, in many instances, now, which formerly, when coalesced with civil power, used whips, dungeons and the stake to maintain the abominable pride of infallibility. And it is against this spiritual wickedness in high places, that divine wisdom directs the gospel warfare.

Though it would be far from just to insinuate that the Saviour was disposed to indulge the profane in their irreligious lives, as a reason why he was so sparing of heavy denunciations against them, it is evident that he viewed the Church as the great and mighty strong hold, where his adversary had fled as his last resort. Against this fortress, therefore, he directed the majesty of his arm. Fearful woes and alarming warnings were ministered to that rebellious house. That church was the Edom where his garments were to be stained, and where his victory was finally glorious. Sin in the present day, and ever since the Christian apostacy, has taken shelter in the Church ; sitting in the temple of God ; shewing himself to be God. Possessing this strong hold, he directs his unmerciful thunders of condemnation against those who do not subscribe to his magna charta. This city is to be burnt with fire. Let those who are chosen to bear arms against it, be faithful.

4thly. As has been observed, the faithfulness of Christ is



seen in his having no will nor work of his own, but attending to the will and work of him who sent him. The importance of this faithfulness rests on the perfection of goodness in the scheme of the father's purpose, which we have observed in our first section. As it was not possible to deviate from the plan and wisdom of God, by adding any thing which could make it better, or by omitting any thing unnecessary, faithfulness in adhering strictly to divine directions, was of infinite importance. So in that ministry which is committed to earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us, faithfulness must be considered as indispensable. Unfaithfulness to the will and work which God has revealed in Christ, setting up a will and a work for which no directions are given in God's word, has led the Church into the wilderness, through the instrumentality of blind guides, who studied their own gratifications more than they did the will of God. Then it became the trade of Priestcraft to make the word of God's will bend to the word of the will of Antichrist, who having set up his rebellion against the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world, endeavors to prove and maintain that the sin of the world never will be taken away. If God says he *will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth*, Antichrist says, God never did really will that such an event should take place. The fact is, vain men have a WILL which is opposed to the WILL of God, and they are so deceived that they think it must be more pleasing to God than the WILL expressed in the above scripture. What have been the evil consequences resulting from this unfaithfulness to the will of God? Let the silent unutterable pangs of despair, the anguish of millions racked with unholy fear; the briny tear which bathes the supposed reprobate infant, tell the lamentable tale! Children of our heavenly father, and heirs of eternal life in Christ, in the room of being brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, have been taught to believe that they were the objects of God's wrath and vengeance the moment they were born! How different from the testimony of Jesus is such doctrine? In faithfulness to his father's eternal purpose, we hear him say: "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God."

Had the christian ministry been as faithful to adhere to the law and the testimony, as they have been to invent

creeds of their own devices, and had they known or acknowledged no covenant but that which is ordered by heaven, and in all things sure, they would have kept the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace.

All the unhappy divisions, the murderous persecutions; the disgraceful animosities, and the unchristianlike coldness and indifference which have cast such a stigma on the name of christianity, are to be set to the account of unfaithfulness in those to whom the people looked for instruction, to the plainly revealed will of God. This particular brings the importance of faithfulness in the ministry, very sensibly to our understandings ; for we live in a day in which we see and know that those things have and do exist. What can be more inconsistent than a belief in the mercy of God, whereby we hope our sins are forgiven, and a disposition to condemn and disfellowship every one who may chance to differ from us in opinion ? How different from the disposition of our merciful and faithful high-priest, who has compassion on the ignorant, and them who are out of the way.

5thly. It appears just to notice, as another powerful incentive to faithfulness in administering the treasures of the word of life, the love which is justly due to our divine master, and the wants of the flock of God, over which the Holy Ghost sets the minister, as an overseer. To these particulars the risen Jesus very feelingly led the mind of his servant Peter, by first enquiring of him respecting his love to himself, and having received an answer the third time in the affirmative, all the blessed lover of mankind required of Peter, as a demonstration of the sincerity of his love to him, was to feed his sheep and lambs. The sentiment seems to be this : Simon Peter, you have been with me as an intimate through my ministry ; you have seen the works which I have done ; there was a time when you thought that though all men should forsake me, you should not, but you fell when the hour of temptation came ; you were a witness to my crucifixion, and you now know that I am alive from the dead ; I am now going to leave you, personally, in this world, for a little time, for glorious purposes corresponding with my labors in the salvation of mankind. Now, Simon Peter, if you have any love for me, show that love by feeding my redeemed sheep and lambs. In you, Simon Peter, let my flock find a constant, faithful shepherd. You must not despise their infirmities, you must not neglect them because

you do not receive, in all instances, due returns from them, for it is for the love which you have for me, that you are to serve my flock. Be careful to give them no other food than such as I give you, bestow on no other conditions than those on which you have received. You will remember how profanely you denied me, and never forget the constancy of my love for you ; be faithful, therefore, as my minister, to my redeemed, and ever assure them that I am the same yesterday, to-day and forever.

6thly. Possessed, as the minister of the gospel is, with all the natural appetites, passions and imperfections common to other men, it requires a faithfulness which will occupy every hour of his life, to avoid being overcome, through the medium of some of those avenues through which sin finds its way to the human heart. It is necessary to keep constantly in mind, that the eyes of the Great Shepherd are looking on the path which is trodden. That the ministers of the word are a spectacle to angels and to men, to exercise constant desires to God, that he may preserve his chosen vessel in honor, to keep the body under, lest when having preached the gospel to others, the preacher becomes a castaway. How unlike the meek son of Mary, is the haughty, heady, high-minded parson, who studies more the vain fashions and customs of the times, than he does the holy scriptures ? Who is more ready to entertain a thoughtless company with unprofitable amusements, than willing to taste the sweets of retired study, by which he would be enabled to give instruction to others. But O ! how refreshing, even as the rain and the dew from heaven, are the communications of the Scribe who is well instructed into the kingdom of heaven, bringing out of his treasures things new and old.

7thly. Let us notice the importance of faithfulness in the ministry, as noticed in our text, in relation to time, UNTO DEATH. There is no period of life to which the minister of the word may arrive, which will justify his throwing off the armour of God. The sin which most easily besets those who have for a long time labored in the vineyard, is that of supposing that they have learned all that there is to be known by men in this world. Having this notion fixed in the mind, in room of sitting at Jesus' feet to receive further instruction, the opinionative man wishes every body to sit at his feet, to learn what he learned when he was young. But as the light of the gospel, like that of the natural day, is in-



creasing, and rapidly advancing, the man who has made his stand, will think others are all going wrong. Thus he not only loses the sweets of fellowship and the refreshments of the traveller, but becomes unprofitable in his calling. As a suitable remedy against such folly, we think proper to consider the words of the Lord Jesus to Saul. Arise, and stand upon thy feet ; for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness, both of those things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee. St. Paul, by the authority of his Lord, could witness to the things which he had seen, but had no direction to reject further communications ; on the other hand, he was made a minister and a witness of those things in the which his Lord should after appear to him. Thus it appears that he ever continued expecting new manifestations, which led him to say, "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended : but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press forward to the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ."

But we may suppose the race at an end, and the victory won. What remains ? Let the conquerors be crowned ; weave garlands of immortal flowers ; bring hither leaves of never-fading laurel, and the deathless olive ; they have been faithful unto death, they shall receive crowns of life.

We come to the consideration of the second division of our text.

1st. The great apostle of the Gentiles, speaking of the christian race, represents it by those who strove for the mastery in the Grecian games, and says, "Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible." And this crown he more particularly explains in the following words, speaking to those to whom he and his fellow-labourers had imparted the word of life. "*For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing ? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming ? For ye are our glory and joy.*" How glorious is such a crown. Earthly monarchs, prompted by ambition and pride, have waded through the blood of their fellow-men to obtain their perishable crowns. But here are incorruptible diadems whose lustre will outshine the stars of heaven, when earthly honors are forgotten. Among the innumerable joys of the world to come, he who has been a faithful and true witness

of all those things in the which his Lord has appeared to him, will realize with infinite delight, the souls who have been delivered from darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, through his ministry.

On that day when these crowns are distributed according to the faithfulness of the servants of the Lord, such questions will not be asked as now appear to be of the first importance. No enquiry will be made whether the subject was educated at an honorable seminary; no question about his elocution; nothing will be named of his great or little natural abilities; no credentials of doctor of divinity will be demanded; nothing said respecting denominations. The sole question must be this, *Was he faithful unto death?* He who was educated at the feet of Gamaliel, and he who was called from his fishing net, must wear crowns according to their faithfulness.

2dly. By holding out such a rich reward as an encouragement to faithfulness in the ministry, our text refutes the unscriptural, unreasonable, and chimerical doctrine of *uninterested benevolence*. Chimerical indeed, as no such principle of moral action exists in the universe. Why did God give his Son to die for us? "God so LOVED the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life." Love surely gives the deepest interest in the object loved, of which the rational mind can conceive. Why did Moses refuse to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, and chuse rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season? "He had respect unto the recompence of reward." Why did our blessed Lord endure the cross and despise the shame? "For the joy set before him." Why did the Apostles of the Lamb suffer the loss of all things? "For the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus."

By the foregoing we see that the Gospel enjoins no duties but such as are accompanied with rich rewards, and requires no faith, but such as is attended with love, joy and peace.

It may not be improper nor unprofitable to take a summary view of the general subject, as it has been applied and illustrated.

As high and important considerations of the reasonableness of faithfulness in the ministry of the Gospel, a number of particulars have been suggested. At the head of these

stands the faithful and gracious purposes of our heavenly father, in the eternal salvation of mankind in Christ his ever blessed Son; the promises which God made of universal blessings in the promised seed, and the testimony that he who hath promised is faithful.

Next was brought to view the faithfulness of the mediator, as he acted through the whole of his mediatorial office, with reference to those establishments of the purposes of his father, in the destruction of sin and death, and the deliverance of mankind from all their woes, to the bliss of reconciliation to God.

Notice was taken also of the opposition which now appears against the Gospel, similar to what appeared in the days when Christ was on earth, and the necessity of equal zeal and faithfulness now, as was then necessary to oppose the torrent of Pharisaical righteousness and religious pride. To this opposition, it has been observed, our blessed Saviour opposed the moral virtues, with all their divine energies; and too much care cannot now be exercised in this particular, for nothing can overcome evil but good. Under this head was urged the necessity of patterning after Christ in prayers, watchfulness, meekness, patience, vigilance in labor, and painful sufferings, and of improving the mild, tolerant government of our happy country, as an encouragement in the faithful discharge of ministerial labours. Particular notice of the necessity of the servants of the Lord paying strict attention to no WILL or WORK of their own, was thought not to be improper. And in this section is pointed out the evils, in short, which have been experienced in consequence of those who profess to teach mankind the knowledge of divine things, departing from the plain revealed WILL of God, and setting up their own WILLS in opposition. The necessity of faithfulness has been urged on the very just ground of that love which the servant of the Lord ought to feel to his divine master, and the wants of the flock of God, whom he is directed, by the Holy Ghost, to lead to the green pastures of the redeemer's grace.

The imperfections of our earthly nature, our proneness to go astray, has been urged, and no doubt with propriety, as a reason why the servant of the Lord should be faithful in the government of all the natural appetites and passions. A remedy has been prescribed against a folly which too often overtakes the labourer in the vineyard of the Lord, when



advanced in life. To this due attention ought to be paid, that the servant may finish his course with joy, and not in vexation. We have noticed the glorious crown of rejoicing, which, in the presence of angels, will be placed on the head of the faithful in the day of the Lord Jesus. And have found that divine revelation holds out such encouragements with a manifest design to interest us in doing well.

REVEREND BROTHER,

In addition to your successful labors of love in the country, your brethren in the ministry rejoice in your having, by the blessing of the great head of the church, been enabled to feed the sheep and lambs of the spiritual fold in this place. It is with confidence in your sincerity and faithfulness in the ministry of the gospel, that this Council have obeyed the voice of this newly formed society, to assist them in their public acknowledgement of you as their minister in the Lord. Here, we hope, under your ministry, to see this vine of our heavenly father's planting, flourish for a long time to come; here, we humbly pray that God would add many souls to the happy number which may sparkle with divine beauty in the crown of your rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus.

*Christian brethren and friends of this parish*—The Council feel disposed to congratulate you on this solemn and joyful occasion. Your prosperity hitherto as a society, has been noticed with great satisfaction: and though our local situations and circumstances have not permitted us to visit you so often as we could have desired, our constant prayers for the promotion of your spiritual interest have been fervent; and it is our reasonable duty on this occasion to acknowledge the goodness of God in building up the cause of Zion in this place.

Having joined with you in the former part of this day, in the dedication of this convenient edifice to the public service of God, and now in setting apart a brother in the ministry of the everlasting Gospel, to your spiritual service, our cup of divine comfort is full. May the good will of him who dwelt in the bush, abide with you, and render the connection between you and your pastor, a lasting blessing to both.

## DEDICATION AND RE-INSTALLATION.

On the 5th of September instant, the new brick Meeting House, erected by the first Universal Society in *Charlestown*, (Mass.) was publicly dedicated. The services commenced at 10 o'clock A. M. The dedication discourse was preached by the Rev. EDWARD MITCHELL, of Boston, from 2d Chronicles, 5th chapter, 13th and 14th verses. In the afternoon of the same day, the Rev. ABNER KNEELAND was re-installed Pastor of that Church and Society. Sermon by the Rev. HOSEA BALLOU, of Portsmouth, N. H. from Revelations ii, 10, last clause. The delivery of the Scriptures, and Charge, by the Rev. THOMAS JONES, of Gloucester, Cape Ann. And the Right Hand of Fellowship by the Rev. EDWARD TURNER, of Salem, Mass. A numerous assembly witnessed with the deepest solemnity and most dignified attention, the transactions of the day. A large band of vocal and instrumental performers of music, by a judicious selection, and elegant and impressive performance of several appropriate pieces, heightened the moral pleasure, animated the devotion, and increased the rapturous joy of the Congregation.

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DIED,

At Murraysville, in Pennsylvania, on the 16th day of May last, the Rev. NOAH MURRAY, aged 66, for many years a faithful, laborious, and able Preacher of Universal Salvation. The circumstances attending his death, reflected high honor upon the Christian vocation, and evinced the strong exercises of that faith which rises superior to trials and death. A record of such events is not only honorable to the departed, but may be blessed of God to the edification of the Churches. Mr. Murray was seized with a violent typhus fever, on the 6th of May, and after 10 days severe struggling with the disease, finished his earthly course. During the whole period, his mind was filled with divine consolations, and he went on his way rejoicing in the Lord Jesus; and having lost all power of speech for two or three days before his death, yet still retaining the unclouded light of his reason, he made signs for a table, and pen and ink, and left a written testimony behind him, in addition to the many expressions which had fallen from his lips, while able to speak, that he died as he had lived, in the fulness of faith, nothing doubting. His remains were interred on the 18th, with civil and masonic honors: and his funeral sermon was preached to the Church and Society in Philadelphia, to which he had formerly preached, by the Rev. GEORGE RICHARDS, their present pastor, from Hebrews 11th chap. 13th verse.



## POETIC DEPARTMENT.

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SOLITUDE.

Hail Solitude divine !  
Blest seat of mental joy and holy love,  
Where man, the mighty works of God may prove.  
Lo ! at thy peaceful shrine,  
A new come suppliant asks a calm retreat,  
Like that which led of old the meditative Isaac's feet.\*

Is Solitude thy name ?  
Methinks the term is greatly misapplied ;  
For, in thy temple, man to God allied,  
Discovers whence he came ;  
There angels dwell, to sacred rapture given :  
The fellow-servants of the earthly heirs of heaven.

There too, in mildest beams,  
Our all benignant Jesus shows his face,  
And while his heavenly features we can trace,  
And catch the trembling gleams :  
The pliant mind of man, with reason warm,  
Receives the lively outlines of his precious form.

There God himself is known,  
In matchless grandeur deck'd, and mighty power,  
Which lead the soul to wonder and adore,  
Before his flaming throne.  
Then, Solitude, to thee I give this name,  
The audience chamber of the Glorious, Great I AM.

There would I choose to rest  
My aching head and wandering feet a while,  
From busy cares and life's distracting toil ;  
And on my Saviour's breast,  
Like favor'd John, of old, I would recline,  
And make his rapturous joys and all his pleasures mine.

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\* "And Isaac went out to meditate in the fields at even tide."  
Gen. xxiv, 63.